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R P Ward

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TREMAINE;

OR THE

MAN OF REFINEMENT.

BY

ROBERT PLUMER WARD, ESQ.

VOL. II.

"No, my dear Mary," said Georgina, as they walked together in the little garden, while Tremaine was passing by the hedge that divided it from the field." *Ch. XL.*

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THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE,

(TO THE FIRST EDITION,)

ADDRESSED TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM STURGES BOURNE, M.P.

&c. &c. &c.

OF TESTWOOD PARK, HAMPSHIRE.

If it should be asked why I have recorded the series of retired scenes, and sometimes abstruse conversations, which compose the following narrative, my answer is a very simple one: in the present state of the world, they may possibly do good, and cannot do harm. Not that I think the world worse now than it has been for perhaps the last hundred years. The upper and lower classes I should say are certainly not so; I am not so sure of the middle. The wide spread of that luxury which is consequent to wealth, by extinguishing the modest style of living which once belonged to us, has undermined our independence, and left our virtue defenceless. All would be Statesmen, Philosophers, or people of fashion. All, too, run to London. The woods and fields are unpeopled; the plain mansions and plain manners of our

fathers deserted and changed; everything is swallowed up by a devouring dissipation; and the simplicities of life are only to be found in books.

Yet it is the proper blending of the simplicities of life with its elegancies, the wholesome union of public and private duty, the golden moderation recommended by Horace (all which you, Sir, understand and practise so well), that can alone enable us, whether we are politicians or private gentlemen, to act up to the real design of our nature, and be happy with dignity, or prosperous (if prosperous) without losing our virtue.

Ambition is, indeed, a great, and, under due regulation, a noble passion; but, for the most part, it is interminable. Few, like you, after showing how fitted they are for the administration of public affairs, think of retiring from them in time; or, if they do retire, they are pursued into their retreat by the spectres of what they have left, and know not how to use the leisure which, perhaps, they have courted.

Yet ambition is at least as full as ever of falsehood and treachery; of the cajoleries of honest men by confidants in office; of the sacrifice of friends, and the prevalency of upstarts.

To fly from such evils is the obvious immediate remedy; but often the remedy is so little understood, as to be worse than the disease. Hence the very dangerous mistakes about solitude, which are noticed in this work.

Again,—there is in the world a spread of instruction, as well as of luxury; and also, I think, more zeal, more lively attention to duty, in our religious instructors. Yet I question if there is, either in the higher or middle

ranks, that regard for the religious, or even the moral feelings and principles of one another, which would check either man or woman in the choice of friends, or in forming the nearest and dearest of connexions.

How sweet is the passion of Love! But I question, as now felt (if indeed it *is* felt, or an indiscriminating luxury have not demanded it a sacrifice to its ravenous selfishness), whether it ever found difficulty from opposing opinions on the points I have mentioned. The truth is, most women, of whatever rank, are, or would be, fine ladies; and a fine lady has on these points (thanks to her education!) no opinion at all.

In duller days, now long gone by, we both of us may indeed remember a tale, which was thought pathetic, of a certain Clementina, who really sacrificed her love to her religion. But her religion was not pure; it was founded in superstition; and her firmness was not her own, but supported by the craftiness of priests. And besides, she was not an English fine lady.

With these convictions, perhaps no apology is necessary for relating a story which, though it is simple and domestic even (I fear) to tameness, displays, in practical colouring, the evils I have imagined; while, at the same time, it endeavours to supply an antidote to them. To be sure, this antidote is offered under a dress which may appear extraordinary, and little suited to the gravity of many of the subjects discussed. I can only say, it was the dress in which the subjects were presented to me; and I was not willing to separate them from the narrative, from a feeling that the lighter and more tender parts might enliven or interest the mind, while they would not derogate from the deeper points brought forward for

investigation.—How I came by the story itself, is of no consequence.

It remains to explain why I have been ambitious to address this work to you, Sir. Simply because I believe you agree with me on almost every one of the subjects discussed; for it is my pride as well as pleasure to think I may apply to you a sentiment uttered, on a very different occasion, to very different persons,—"tibi eadem quæ mihi, bona malaque esse intellexi." In a word, without glancing at your high public character, which might well deem itself above the patronage of a mere private story, no name I might have fixed upon could be more appropriate to a work, the object of which is to recommend good sense, proper moderation, and sound Theology, in opposition to all extremes, whether of ambition, refinement, or dangerous scepticism.

To return to the work itself,—if it detach but one man, or one woman, from the headlong career which most are pursuing, and induce them to look for a while into themselves, as God and nature intended them to do, its end will be answered.

I am, Sir,
With unfeigned esteem,
Your very faithful servant,
THE AUTHOR.

TREMAINE,

OR,

THE MAN OF REFINEMENT.

CHAPTER I.

AN ARRIVAL IN SOLITUDE.

Oh! Jupiter! how weary are my spirits
SHAKSPEARE.

It was the middle of August; the great gates of Belmont were thrown open by the obsequious porter at the lodge; a barouche and four, well appointed, drove in at a gallop, and rapidly neared the hall, the steps of which were lined with servants; and everything denoted the arrival of a man of consequence, at his seat in the country.

It was Tremaine; a name known in the political world for talents and integrity; in the fashionable, as an ornament of the higher circles; and in the female, as belonging to a man whom all prudent mothers wished to obtain for their daughters, and many a daughter for herself. He was in truth a person of great polish, refined taste, and high reputation.

He was alone, and alighted from his carriage with a jaded look, and the air of a person little pleased with himself; yet he had come the whole way from London without stop or accident, through a fine country, and in delightful weather.

To the salutations of his servants of the upper class, he replied as if he received their attentions kindly, but

was too much self-absorbed to think about them. At the same time he complained of fatigue, said the roads were execrable, and the weather hot.

Now the roads had been very good, and the weather temperate. His housekeeper, a respectable woman who had lived with his mother, and with whom he usually interchanged a few words of kindness on his arrival at home, lingered behind the rest. "I have no orders for you, Watson," he said, "but that dinner should be served at eight." The housekeeper slowly moved off, wondering, if not hurt, at the reserve of a master, whose affability had always been uniform to his servants, and flattering to herself.

"And how to pass the time till then?" continued he to himself; "how to find here what London cannot afford?" (and he paced the room in serious musing;) "these are questions after all: yes! after all, not easily settled. Yet serenity" (throwing up the sash, which opened upon a diversified country) "seems to live in these woods; and equally" (turning to the interior of the apartment) "in these rooms."

The pictures of his grand and great-grandfathers, their wives, and a train of uncles and aunts,—some in hunting coats, with dogs and fowling-pieces, some in full suits of velvet, some with distaffs, and some with crooks, —caught his eye as he said this. They seemed all to partake of the general quiet. All the little cares and vexations of life were over with them; if indeed they had ever had any; so composed was their air, and so placidly did they appear to look upon their descendant.

"'After life's fitful fever, they sleep well!'" said Tremaine, as he moved slowly along, and contemplated them one after the other. "Without dying, I will endeavour to do so too: and here will be the best chance for it. And yet," continued he, after a pause, and returning to the prospect, "there are not wanting persons who think woods and fields dulness, and a palace in the country a prison."

He paused again, but added, "thank God! I am not of that opinion: on the contrary, it is the world

that is dull and uninteresting: or where it is otherwise, only so because it is wrangling, knavish, and false."

The thought did not please. "Here, however," he went on, "I can retire into myself—here keep the designing, the treacherous, and the vulgar, all at an equal distance." At this he threw himself on a sofa, and a profound reverie seemed gradually to subside into a doze of several minutes; so that, in figure at least, though not in placidity, he gave one the idea of that happy prelate, who

——— Muni d'un déjeûner,
Dormant d'un léger somme, attendoit le dîner.*

But no! it was not *un léger somme*. He had, in fact, dozed almost the whole way from London; having scarcely opened his eyes to the prospects he had passed through, though the harvest, in all the pride of ripeness, had courted him to cheerfulness.

In truth, he had not felt his interest awakened during a single mile of the journey; a fault perhaps owing to the necessity he had imposed upon himself, of getting to Belmont as fast as the horses could carry him.

He continued on his couch for some minutes, when his valet entered, and asked if he would dress. "No!" was the reply (as a sort of sigh escaped him), "there is nothing here, I apprehend, worth dressing for." The interruption, however, roused him. "I will go," said he, "to the library."

It was a very magnificent room, and had lately received a considerable accession from an expensive new purchase, which had been ranged in the modern taste by a fashionable architect. He was charmed with the effect, and throwing himself into a reading chair of exquisite invention, "I will here," said he, "pass the greatest part of my time; the treasures of science are at my command, and he who has them, has every thing. How flat and unprofitable would seem this same world, which we all of us so strangely court, if man but knew his own

* Lutrin.

nature, and could live up to its dignity. But to do this he must do as I have done;—retire from the forwardness of upstart impertinence, or the caprice of those whom we may have most loved and trusted."

A volume of Shaftesbury lying open before him, he looked over its pompous engravings and classical emblems—representations of his Lordship's library, and of his Lordship's self. "He was an elegant man," said Tremaine, turning over the pages, "and a real philosopher; and if he did not discover truth, he at least detected falsehood. I shall delight, like him, to appreciate the value of things, and view the world at a distance; and shall be able to do so more exactly now than when plunged in its tumults. I, too, may not discover truth; but at least I shall have leisure to make the attempt. I am impatient to begin."

The sight of a distant temple of his own rearing, in a beautiful wood, here caught his eye. It reflected the rays of the setting sun, and the whole prospect was burnished with splendour. He was pleased with the effect; and it gave an additional complacency to his brow as he viewed, from a favourable point, this work of his own taste. "Here," continued he, "Philosophy may really be exercised, and Contemplation prune her wings."

> Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata,
> Hic nemus.

He went on planning in his own mind hours of enjoyment, in a place dedicated, as it should seem, to wisdom and happiness. His temple recalled ancient Greece to his mind, and the groves of Academus rose to his view. "How different," exclaimed he, "from a trifling or slippery world, where all is vulgarity, envy, or ennui."

A servant now announced dinner, a summons for which, with all his philosophy, he secretly craved: so that a minute more found him seated at table.

His repast was *recherche* in the extreme; yet his senses were not pleased, and his palate scarcely excited. Every thing was ill-seasoned, and either too much or too

little done. In fact, notwithstanding his craving, he had either waited too long, or was not hungry. In fact, too, however strange it may seem, although he had now come sixty miles to be alone, he was almost surprised, and to a cursory observer might have appeared not pleased, to find exactly what he came for. His dinner forced upon his memory (involuntarily, indeed, but not the less strongly) the companions of his banquets in London; and the conversation, the interchange of idea, the lively sallies of polite fellowship, were thought of at least, though not (he said) with regret: on the contrary, as he poured out a bumper of Burgundy, he indulged again in a mental soliloquy upon the delights of solitude, and the unfitness of a man to live who could not live alone.

"The world," said he, "is so entirely, even in its banquets, a mere vulgar crowd, that the true play of mind is seldom indulged. How different is the noisy contest for pre-eminence in conversation—the impatience of interruption—the struggle for wit that will not come—from this calm and happy repast! It is in solitary reflection alone that we feel ourselves men; and that is the best feast which least interferes with it. Let others bear the burthen of the world! *I* view it at a distance."

These reflections were diluted with more Burgundy; though neither that, nor any French wine, agreed with his constitution: an inconvenience, however, which he never would allow. As for Port, and all Spanish vintages, they were nothing but liquid fire, and had long been made to yield to this more elegant beverage; to carry off which, it was only necessary to throw in a little coffee; which he now drank in its quintessence, fuming from a silver lamp on the table, while he crowned it with no inconsiderable quantity of liqueur. This, together with having, without appetite, tasted of almost every dish before him, made him at midnight feel heated and uneasy, and he retired to a bed of down, where, not having subdued his body with any fatigue, he was surprised to find that he could not sleep.

CHAPTER II.

RETROSPECTIVE HISTORY OF A MAN OF REFINEMENT.

The Courtier's, Soldier's, Scholar's eye, tongue, sword.
SHAKSPEARE.

THUS passed the evening of the arrival of Tremaine at his retirement; that retirement which he had so sighed for, amidst many a scene of tumult and vexation in the world, where he had taken a lead. It is true, he thought of it most when least successful in any object he might be pursuing. But still his mind dwelt often with genuine pleasure on the charms of tranquillity, and the usefulness, the independence, and even the necessity of frequent seclusion. Accordingly, at Court, in the Senate, or in the heat and crowd of assemblies, particularly when things went ill, he always consoled himself with the notions of that happy life, which, in a philosophical retreat, and with unbounded leisure, he was sure of commanding. His friends, indeed, told him (and he was not displeased at the liberty), that he had yet no right to such an indulgence; that the world still wanted him,—either to oppose the most corrupt of administrations,* or to become a minister himself. But, in reply, he used to say that he must live for himself, as well as his country; and that it was in the meridian, not in the wane of life, that man could best assert the dignity of retreat. He was fond, on these occasions, of quoting the philosophic Temple, of whom it had been said by Hume, "that he was a man whom philosophy had taught to despise the world without rendering him unfit for it." He would dwell, too, upon that exclamation of King Charles II. when he found Sir William too restless to

* The administration of the time being is always the most corrupt of administrations.

give his mind to a great public question: "So, get ye gone to Shene! we shall have no good of you till you have been there."

Sir William Temple's, indeed, was a full mind. Was Tremaine's, then, a vacant one? Certainly not; for his real character must not be inferred from the little traits we have hitherto related of him, but from the history which we shall have occasion to give of his past life, and of that portion of it which followed the scene in which we have just exhibited him.

We have said that Tremaine was in the meridian of his age. He had formerly read much, and he had lived a great deal in the world; though chiefly in the highest circle of it: a sort of natural or early-acquired fastidiousness, having, even as a younger brother, forbidden much mixture with any other.

Being the younger son of a younger brother, he was designed, having much quickness of parts, for a learned profession. There was a considerable family living which might have made him easy in fortune; and, accordingly, he gave some little time to Divinity. But this pursuit did not prevent the cultivation of those high acquaintance among whom his own connexions threw him, and whose manners and notions were particularly pleasing to his frame of mind. He indeed at first loved the court, for the sunshine with which it often dazzles a young bosom; and he thought at one time of pursuing a court life; but soon drew back, from finding that his heart had need of better things. In short, if fashionable society had charms for him, literature and reflection had more; or at least it was always doubtful to which he was most devoted. This disposition at once to refinement and sensibility, pushed as far as it would go, formed at length a peculiarity in his character, which never quitted him: nor was it at all diminished by his being, at the same time, not only peculiarly alive to the charms of female society, but fastidiously nice in his notions of female character. That with much susceptibility, therefore, he was still a bachelor, though approaching the middle of life—that he should even have seemed to take his leave of the sex—is not at

all inconsistent. His fastidiousness, though always allied to integrity and feeling, coloured, indeed, all his pursuits; his earlier conduct scarcely more than his subsequent fate.

Finding, therefore, many of his tastes promoted by the pursuit of the ecclesiastical profession, and none of them thwarted, he listened to the advice given him by his friends, and the advantage held out by the head of his family, in the promise of the living before-mentioned.

Tremaine's first impressions in Divinity delighted him. A great first cause, with all its million of consequences; —a deep research into antiquity, tradition, criticism, and even poetry;—these held possession of his soul for a time. But at length metaphysics came; and what was worse, metaphysical jargon. His mind was appalled, more perhaps through his taste than his understanding; and having left his landmarks, he betook himself to Bolingbroke and Voltaire, instead of proceeding with the Bible. In short, he dabbled with, instead of studying "Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate;" till, like the devils who had dabbled before him, he

Found no end, in wandering mazes *lost*.

He embraced, indeed, a kind of Epicurean notion of the Deity; which, while it confessed his existence, by denying every thing else, rendered it of little consequence whether he existed or not. And after trying a little, and but a little, to unravel the difficulties in which he had enwrapped himself, and which task the subtlety of his own mind only rendered a more hopeless one, he thought it right to refuse the living, and renounce the church.

Had he been contented with this, he might have been rewarded by the approbation which at least his disinterestedness and principle deserved. But, unfortunately for himself, he was not sufficiently decided against the tenets he had rejected, to render his satisfaction perfect in the sacrifice he had made. An amiable and sincere clergyman apparently happy in the performance of his duties, always made him doubtful; and he was disposed to seek refuge, at last, in an opinion which he took pains

(though here also without success) to render as fixed as he could,—that all church ceremonies were useless, and almost all churchmen insincere.

He was indeed too naturally just not to feel uneasy at this; for he had a disposition, particularly in his youth, to feel

All various Nature pressing on the heart;

and he was always happiest when most under that influence. At the same time, a listless temper, operating upon an over-delicate taste, made him too often reject what, if not rejected, might have made him happy.

Tremaine's unsatisfied mind having induced him to reject the church, he endeavoured to find anchorage in the certainty of the law. Accordingly, for about twelve months, he studied its philosophy in the moralists—its antiquities in the historians—and its rewards in the splendour which attends upon the eloquence of counsel, and the honours of the Bench. But he studied them in his lodgings in May Fair, not at the Temple: for except at the only dinner he ate in the Temple Hall, when he *endeavoured* to keep a term, he never was known to have been in an Inn of Court. He once, indeed, heard the Chancellor from the woolsack in the House of Lords, on a great constitutional question; and he once heard a distinguished popular advocate, in mitigation of the crime of a young woman of high birth, who, sacrificed by her family to a man she could not love, and who did not love her, fell, after a struggle, into the arms of a man, who had always possessed her heart.

It was the impression produced by these speeches that sent him to the law; but the bent of character above described soon sent him back again. His over-delicate and sickly fancy could not endure law society. The hard sense, indeed, which he there met with, sometimes arrested his understanding; but the pedantry with which it was attired absolutely petrified him. Spoiled by his prejudices, he stayed not to discover, as he might have done, the genius, taste and real elegance of mind which belong to many who are yet the most learned at the bar.

As to their females,—having once ventured to one of their assemblies in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, he escaped, after an hour's purgatory, vowing never to see another; and no arguments of his friends could persuade him that happiness of any kind could be found in what he called such a second-rate profession.

Though his patrimony was now almost exhausted, he betook himself to arms, and entered the Guards. Here at least he was sure of finding honourable feeling, polished manners, and gallantry of spirit. He made a campaign, and obtained distinction; that is, such distinction as a captain of a company could acquire. But from the lateness of his entry into the army, he had the mortification to find himself commanded by persons some years his juniors. It is true, his family interest placed him at head-quarters. But it was not there that he was always likely to feel satisfied. He was indeed remarked as a sort of *frondeur*, who was ever commending merit which others did not choose to allow, and advocating the claims of officers who had nothing but their friendlessness to recommend them. Yet he was often forced to confess, that even these by no means reached, in personal qualifications, the high notions he had formed of the military character; and some of them at last, abandoning him as their protector, got before him by the lowest arts of flattery, and the most vicious complaisance. This excited new disgusts. "The whole constitution of the army," he said, "was wrong; it was a mistake to suppose it composed of gentlemen; it neither rewarded nor ennobled its members."

In this state of things, he came to a downright quarrel with his general (a relation of his own), for sending home one of his staff with the intelligence of a victory, when another had distinguished himself more in the battle. It was in vain the general condescended to point out, that, in order to avoid invidious distinction, a rule had been adopted to send home officers in their turn. He served out the campaign, and at the end of it quitted the army, with some addition to his reputation on the score of gallantry, and not a little on the score of discontent.

Thus situated, his mind soured, his hopes crossed, his youth wasted, and his fortune spent, an employment of some consequence was offered him about the court: but, as it was also a political employment, which required its possessor to support the minister, and as the politics of his family had ever led them to opposition, he unhesitatingly declined it; assigning the true reason. This gave him considerable *éclat;* particularly as he was known to be poor: and it was under these circumstances, that, by the death of an uncle and cousin nearly at the same time, he suddenly found himself master of an immense estate.

Tremaine was now not far from thirty, and his heart beat high at the prospects before him. He resolved to be happy: and if the indulgence of a disposition boundless in generosity, and naturally kind, could confer happiness, he ought to have found it; or it were endless to recount the instances of his active bounty to all who stood in need of it.

But with all this, he was more spoilt than ever. Though no longer in the heyday of youth, he might yet be called young; and all things seemed to court him. Yet his temper grew more and more delicate; and as to his natural fastidiousness, never having discovered that, he of course took no pains to correct it.

At the same time he had formed to himself strange notions (not, indeed, arising from personal vanity, but from feelings less likely to make him happy) of the power of his situation, combined with his acquirements, always to make his mind suffice to itself, without the least dependence upon the world.

CHAPTER III.

THE AMOURETTES OF A MAN OF REFINEMENT.

——————— Full many a lady
I have eyed with best regards, and many a time
The harmony of their tongues hath into bondage
Brought my too diligent ear: for several virtues
Have I liked several women; never any
With so full a soul, but some defect in her
Did quarrel with the noblest grace she owed,
And put it to the foil.

SHAKSPEARE.

WERE the fair, then, neglected by Mr. Tremaine all this time? or did they neglect him?—Not so on either side. The sort of reputation he had made, even before his accession to fortune; his manners, figure, and features, in all of which there was a certain loftiness; his very *finery* itself (to use the term often applied to it in the world of fashion) had made him a person of no small consideration among the ladies. What must he be now, that he was one of the best matches in England? The daughters had courted him before; the mothers courted him now. At this, not only his integrity was disgusted, but his self-love was alarmed. There was nothing he dreaded so much as the chance of not being beloved for his own sake.

Yet as we have said he was susceptible (and he certainly was so), one would have supposed there had been opportunity of putting this out of doubt, before his hopes were, as he said, marred by his attainment to wealth. They were marred, however, by himself; for his own nice breeding and habits prevented his inclinations, for the most part, from going beyond a certain point. His enemies, or rather his enviers (of whom he had not a few), gave an air even of ridicule to some of what they

called his amourettes: for they said he was too fine for an amour. It was said too (and in this there was some truth), that in his youth he had conceived a passion for the handsome daughter of the head of the college to which he belonged; and that the inclination was even mutual, and that all expected a marriage; but that the whole affair was put an end to in a moment, by the unhappy accident of a windy walk up Headington hill. It was not that the fair one's leg was either thick or crooked: for it was even remarkably well shaped. But the scandal went on to say, that a garter, which happened to fall on the occasion, was considerably the worse for wear. Certain it is that the affair was broken off immediately; nor could all the kind and graceful looks, nor the real merit of the lady, afterwards move him.

Another growing passion was reported to have been nipped in the bud, by the fair one not being sufficiently sentimental; a third, by her being too much so; a fourth, by his detecting her in reading Tom Jones; a fifth, by her having eaten her peas with a knife; and scandal added that one of his predilections for a young lady of the very first quality in France, was sickened to death, by telling him one day *qu'elle avait pris médecine!*

Had this sensible though fastidious heart never, then, met with an object which he thought really worth its attachment? Yes! and the event coloured much of his life. It is rather a long story, and the reader might possibly be content to escape it; but as it developes much of the character and heart of this romantic man, we must afford a few minutes to its relation.

It was on a May evening, in the province of Auvergne in France, that Tremaine found himself on the banks of the little river Allier; which, after watering this beautiful province, falls into the Loire. It was after his accession to fortune. The sun had just set: and those who have ever known the climate of the countries adjacent to the Loire, are acquainted with the impressions made on the senses by the softest air in the world tempering the glow of the retreating day. The rippling of

the stream, a wooded bank, a thousand flowers, a thousand birds—all seemed to speak to the heart.

Tremaine was alone: he had left his carriage and servants at Limoges, in the Limousin: and in a fit of musing, but not of moping melancholy—and, it may be added, in a fit of exertion not over common with him—he had resolved to explore this part of France on horseback,—where, however, the landscapes were much more beautiful than the roads were good.

He took with him only a French guide for a servant. His loneliness soothed but did not oppress him; for he had lately been plunged in the very depths of French dissipation; and a solitary walk in such a scene seemed at this moment the most suited to his taste of anything in the world. His heart expanded to the touch of nature; but yet there was a void in it.

"Is it not strange," said he to himself as he surveyed the landscape, "that I should always be viewing these scenes by myself, and that, at eight and twenty, the loveliest part of the creation should to me still be as nothing?"

He thought over all the fair beings to whom he had ever felt inclined, regretting none of them, and began to think (to him a strange speculation) that in the upper ranks, though there was more elegance of manner, there was less of that real feeling which constitutes the love he sighed to meet with. He seemed even to think there might be more probability of finding it in the middling, perhaps even in the lower classes of society. "What signifies it," continued he, "where I meet with it? Will not my own rank elevate and illustrate whomsoever I please?"

The murmur of the water had now subsided a few minutes, when from the other side of a hedge of sweet shrubs, which inclosed a small garden, his ear was struck with sounds which in that place absolutely astonished him.

It was the voice of a young female reading Milton in English, with a tone and feeling which, even in England,

would have been charming. Another voice now and then interposing, showed that the reader was not alone; and the few sentences that passed, proved the persons to be mother and daughter.

The passage which Tremaine last heard, was that so well known, beginning with,

Sweet is the breath of morn, &c.

The young unknown read it with a tenderness which did not fail to strike on the heart of the hearer, any more than the observation that followed. "Oh! my dear mother, what happiness is here described; and how does my heart swell whenever I think of such conjugal tenderness! If ever I have a husband, oh! how I shall love him!"

"'Tis well, my dear," replied the mother, "that we are alone: else such a speech, though the most natural in the world, might subject you to ill-natured interpretations. You are so *naïve* and so young, that people who did not know, might not understand you. But Heaven forbid, my dear Eugenia, that you should not express your feelings before your mother."

"Ah!" replied Eugenia with a sigh, "how can it be wrong to express one's feelings before any one?"

Deeply did these words impress themselves on Mr. Tremaine, and willingly would he have heard more; but while a vague thought struck upon his mind, that here was a pure unsophisticated being, such as his fancy had coveted, he felt himself in the situation of a listener; and therefore, merely with a view to show that some one was nigh, he began to call aloud in English to a spaniel he had with him.

His voice alarmed the two recluses, who immediately left their seats; yet struck with curiosity to know how a countryman could be so near them in such a part of the world.

The curiosity was at the very least partaken; and no wonder, therefore, as the ladies had to cross the road from the garden to their house, that no designed retreat on either side prevented their meeting. Tremaine, indeed,

seeing them at the little gate which led from the garden, hastened to open it for them; and the politeness of his air, as well as his animated manner, struck both the ladies. But as they curtsied their thanks, and were retreating to the house, he began to think he should lose them; so without ceremony (a thing not at all surprising in France), he accosted them in English.

"Is it possible," said he, "that I have the pleasure of seeing two of my countrywomen, and two *such* countrywomen, in a village in Auvergne?"

The air and look of interest with which he uttered this were not lost upon either lady. The elder, though pleased, regarded it as common gallantry; but it went deep into the very heart of the younger, whose cheek it suffused with blushes. It was a very lovely cheek, and fancy might revel long before it created its fellow. With a simplicity which seemed to make concealment of any one emotion impossible, there was yet a bashfulness about this young person, which appeared to demand protection and encouragement; and what it demanded was asked in a manner so gentle, and at the same time so frank, that Tremaine was perfectly charmed by it.

With his admiration, too, all his faculties were called forth; and as few exceeded him in good breeding, and both mother and daughter were of a character peculiarly alive to it, a very little, and very common conversation, on such topics as the occasion of their meeting and the beauty of the place inspired, made the three parties better acquainted in ten minutes, than the common scenes of the world could in a week.

They entered a little court before the house (which was a sort of moderate château in the old French style), full of flowers, *en parterre*, backed by espaliers and beds of strawberries; and while Tremaine was complimenting them on the agreeableness of their retreat, two very young, sprightly, and pretty girls ran out to greet mamma, telling her that their supper of fruit and cream was ready.

The admiration which these lively children drew from Tremaine won still more upon the elder lady; while his whole manner and language, and particularly the soft-

ness which seemed naturally to accompany every thing he addressed to her, made a deep impression upon the sensitive heart of the younger.

In the conversation, her mother of course took the lead. Indeed, Eugenia said very little, but seemed to defer, with the modesty natural to her, to what fell from her seniors. But though she was silent, it was not an unobserving silence; and the changeful traits of a countenance that absolutely spoke, marked an attention, more gratifying perhaps to Tremaine, than if she had joined in the discourse.

Eugenia's eyes were fixed upon his all the time he was speaking,—fixed as if fascinated, yet seemingly embarrassed. But when he took his leave to go, she broke through her restraint, as if impelled by a superior power, and involuntarily exclaimed, "Oh! stay, and go on with your beautiful conversation."

Such *naïveté*, in his then humour, touched his very soul. He gazed upon his new acquaintance, as if anxious to mark the real character of such a speech; and perceiving nothing but sincerity in a face that appeared to be candour itself, *his* sparkled in his turn with a pleasure that more and more impressed in its favour not only Eugenia, but her mother herself.

In short, he thought no more of going; he was in form invited to stay; and he supped that evening in the garden of Mrs. Belson, with her and her children.

CHAPTER IV.

THE AMOUR OF A MAN OF REFINEMENT.

Sweet, good night:
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.

SHAKSPEARE.

When Tremaine consented to the invitation of Mrs. Belson, the looks of her daughter seemed to flash with

pleasure. Her bosom heaved with what we should call consciousness, but that we should be really at a loss to say of what she was conscious, unless of present, and surely of innocent enjoyment. Suddenly, however, rising up, she said she would desire her sisters to pick the freshest strawberries for their repast, and would herself go to the dairy for cream.

Tremaine entreated she would not leave them. "Oh!" said she, "I shall be back in an instant; only do not talk much till I return, particularly about England. Do not let him, mamma."

She then sprang like a doe across the lawn, and was out of sight in a moment.

"I think," said Tremaine, "I never saw such alacrity of kindness; such apparently genuine feeling; or such delicious *naïveté* in shewing it. Perhaps, too, I might add, if it were not to her mother, I never saw such beauty —certainly such expression."

"She is all she seems," said Mrs. Belson; "but she is particularly animated just now, from meeting a countryman so unexpectedly; and this will, I hope, explain to you the appearance of a frankness of manner, which in England could only belong to an old acquaintance."

Then changing her tone a little, she added, "Indeed, I feel as if I stood in need of the same apology myself, for this sudden invitation to a person of whose existence I knew not a few minutes ago, and with whose very name I am even now unacquainted."

She said this inquiringly: and Tremaine found it necessary to announce his name,—intimating that he was of Northamptonshire, and travelling for amusement; but carefully concealing his situation in the world.

Mrs. Belson, who had heard of his family, found he was at least a gentleman; and felt that all he had said, looked, or done, bespoke the man of fashion. Her civilities, therefore, were not lessened by the knowledge of his name, which she communicated to Eugenia as soon as she returned.

"What a beautiful name!" said Eugenia, fixing her eyes again upon his.

A very animated conversation now ensued, in which Mrs. Belson shewed both talent and cultivation, and in which, it may be supposed, Tremaine was not deficient. He frequently appealed to his new acquaintance, as if desirous of drawing her out; and though she was too bashful to hazard much of remark, it seemed to him (and it gave him pleasure) that her mind was disposed to be the very echo of his own.

In truth, all the three were animated with a romantic spirit; the ladies, perhaps, even more than the gentleman; and of the ladies, the elder scarcely less than the younger. The only difference between them on this point seemed to be, that the habits of the world had taught Mrs. Belson a little (and but a little) wariness, in the expression of feelings, which her daughter was only restrained by modesty from indulging to the utmost.

At any rate, the evening was a charming one to Tremaine, and the village clock had struck ten (a late hour in France) before he judged it necessary to take his leave.

Eugenia gave a sigh when he motioned to go; and, as the moon shone bright, proposed to her mother to accompany their guest to the end of the lane that led from their house to the auberge. Mrs. Belson smiled; Tremaine was delighted; and giving each lady an arm, felt more interested than he had for years.

When they came to the end of their walk, Tremaine, on taking leave, said, "My dear madam, how is it possible for me to thank you for perhaps the most charming evening I ever spent!"

Eugenia's heart throbbed at the words, and she was not a little pleased at her mother's answering, with good-humoured ease, "By trying whether the morning may not prove as pleasant as the evening. I should be sorry that the first should be also the last day of our acquaintance."

On Tremaine's expressing his intention of profiting by her kindness, Eugenia exclaimed,—"Oh! then, we shall see him again!" and she actually clapped her hands with pleasure.

Her mother smiling, said, "'Tis the strangest girl! She knows not how to conceal an emotion!"

"Heaven forbid she should," exclaimed Tremaine; and the parties separated for the night.

CHAPTER V.

THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

I pray, Sir, tell me—is it possible
That love should of a sudden take such hold?

SHAKSPEARE.

Returned to his inn, it was late before Tremaine could seek his bed, and then not to sleep.

"She is by far the most interesting young creature," said he to himself, "I ever met with. If Nature ever yet spoke in person, she is here."

He turned, and turned again in his bed, and attempted to close his eyes; but Eugenia was ever before them. Who she was, and what she was, were questions he did not fail to ask himself. But it mattered not, he said; it was evident that both mother and daughter were, in mind and manners, far removed from vulgar life, if they might not belong to his own sphere. He went on to hazard a hundred conjectures of another nature. Eugenia seemed all sensibility; had she ever loved, or was her heart virgin? It seemed made for love! But could she love *him?*

It must be owned, he had gone very far indeed when he reached this topic; not that it was very distinct even to his own mind: it however floated there, with a thousand other vague thoughts; the only thing certain to his consciousness being, that he had met with a person, who, to the most lovely beauty he had ever seen, appeared to join all that simplicity and truth of nature which his heart had so long and so fondly coveted.

Eugenia, on her part, was scarcely less restless. She loitered long with her mother, to talk of their extraordi-

nary adventure. "Was there ever any thing so elegant, so noble, as their guest! such propriety, yet such softness! so perfect a gentleman! so fraught with good taste, and *every virtue!*"

"That last is going very far," said her mother: "we must see much more of him before we can judge of that."

"Oh! I'm sure of it," said Eugenia. "What happiness to be his friend! and to be called his friend! How kind to a mere cottage girl! Oh, mother, if he stays here, I shall love him too well—I already prefer him to all the world!"

The next morning brought Tremaine to their gate. His young friend was there already. "I have been looking for you all the morning," said she, "and am *so* glad."

Tremaine again felt a little amazed; but perceiving, as she said this, a glowing cheek, a sparkling eye, and a form evidently agitated with pleasure, he could only give credence to this flattering appearance, and bless his good fortune for having thrown in his way such a study for his heart, in its present pursuit.

It is needless to pursue the detail of this part of the narrative. It is sufficient that the day afforded the same delight to all the party as the preceding evening had done; and that Tremaine passed it, and the day after that, and the next, and the next, with his new friends, in a manner to confirm all his notions of Eugenia's sensibility, as well as his conviction that he alone was its absorbing object. He gathered, however (contrary to the course of romance), that there was nothing very remarkable either in Eugenia's situation or history. Mrs. Belson was in fact the widow of a gentleman of merit, but in middle life. She had made herself what she was by the force of her own talent and observation, and had retired to this province, in order the better to conduct the education of her children.

To do Mr. Tremaine justice, this weighed either nothing, or very little with him. He had all his life long sought for a *virgin* heart, and an unsophisticated mind, which he might be able to attach to his own, for his own

sake, without any view to his rank and situation. Without such demonstration, he thought he never could count either upon the actual existence of the feelings themselves of which he was in search, or the fidelity of the heart which might seem to possess them. To be sure he would have wished to have found his object in the midst of elegance and splendour; but, exclusive of his having sought it there in vain, his being every where known to possess many thousands a-year, prevented all possibility of making an experiment on the reality and extent of the affection he wished to prove. He, therefore, as we have before hinted, had for some time past turned from the rich and great, without much immediate plan as to any others, when chance threw this daughter of nature and retirement in his way; and if Eugenia's mind answered his as a companion, all the rest, he imagined, was completely out of doubt. He therefore willingly gave some days to the farther contemplation of this great object; and his pleasure was complete on finding that, while her heart seemed framed to carry love to its most romantic excess, her mind was of so plastic a nature that he might mould it to what he pleased. An amiable yielding to the opinion and wishes of those she loved, was evidently its characteristic. But as yet he had made no actual experiment on her affections; and, indeed, such was the glow of her *friendship*, as Eugenia called it, (and took no pains to conceal it, either from him, her mother, or herself,) that no other man would perhaps have thought of making any.

He had represented himself to Mrs. Belson merely as a man of good connexions: and so far he was relieved from the fear that his fortune stood in the way of a free decision, should his own heart prompt him to go on. But he wished still more; and in his romance, his eccentricity, or his refinement—call it what we please—he conceived the strange design of experimenting upon the strength of his young friend's attachment to him, removed from all extraneous influence, even of hope.

Nothing was ever perhaps more difficult, or more unfair; yet he both resolved and contrived to execute it.

To inquire into the justice of the attempt never struck him as necessary.

It was in the third week of their acquaintance, that, in hinting more of his history to Mrs. Belson, he gave her to understand that the whole soul of an uncle, on whom was his sole dependance for any thing like fortune, was fixed upon his forming a high matrimonial connexion: he was, therefore, any thing but his own master, as to the disposal of his hand; and though nothing had yet passed in form between himself and the lady, yet his uncle had insisted upon *carte blanche* being left with him on the subject, before he allowed him to proceed on his travels.

Mrs. Belson received this confidence with evident disappointment, as well as surprise; and changing to a cold seriousness, asked if she might be allowed to communicate the information to Eugenia.

"I can have no wish to withhold it," said Tremaine.

To his great joy, it seemed to make no difference in the feelings of that young lady, or, if any, only to release her from the little restraint she had hitherto imposed upon her expressions of admiration and regard for him.

But this did not satisfy her more prudent mamma: who, with no unreasonable caution, expressed so much anxiety at an intercourse, which she said might destroy her daughter's peace, while it never could crown her affection as it deserved, that, as a price almost for permission to remain, Tremaine was forced to beat a parley, and come to terms. It was therefore settled that after a little time he should return to England, and obtain the release of his promise to his uncle, of giving him the disposal of a heart which was no longer his own.

Mrs. Belson was prudent enough to be very particular in endeavouring to sift out how far he was in this likely to succeed; but she could learn no more than that he had the best hopes; failing in which, he would still beg to present himself to Eugenia with such chances as his own very small fortune might afford him. Mrs. Belson balanced some time upon this, as any good mother would, and talked of the proper authority of relations on whom we depend; but Eugenia coming to Tremaine's aid, and

declaring that she would rather be his friend, than even the wife of a richer man, she yielded, and Tremaine gave himself up to happiness.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Then confess
What treason there is mingled with your love!
None but that ugly treason of mistrust,
Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love!
SHAKSPEARE.

But an incident now occurred, critical to the peace of our man of refinement. He could not be so much in the family of Mrs. Belson, nor so pointedly the favourite of that lady and Eugenia, without feeling his interest extend to her younger sisters. Lavinia, the next in age, though not above thirteen or fourteen, was of peculiar vivacity, and possessed great powers of observation. She often rallied them both upon their *friendship*—laying a particular emphasis upon the word; and, in mere girlish spirits, would sometimes exclaim, "Poor Captain Monson!" and then, as if conscious of having done wrong, would run away, and appear no more for some time.

Tremaine, from the first curious, became in the end alarmed at this; and at length requested to know of Eugenia what the *espièglerie* meant;—who Captain Monson was, and what interest he had in connexion with hers?

Eugenia with firmness enough, and a sincerity of manner which calmed much of his fear, said it was due to his friendship that he should know. "He was a ward of my father," said she, "a very few years older than myself; bred up from infancy with me; of great worth: and who once gave me his love."

"And for no return?" asked Tremaine, in an agitation he could not conceal.

"Ah! what can I say?" exclaimed Eugenia. "You do not like me for this confession!"

"I have heard none," answered Tremaine, "and I wait an honest avowal."

"You shall have it," said Eugenia—"I did love him, *to a degree.*"

"To a degree! could you then measure love so exactly? You! so young, so enthusiastic, and so sincere!"

Eugenia did not notice, or perhaps did not understand, Tremaine's quibble on her girlish expression of "to a degree," but proceeded:—"I have told my mother, who questioned me on this subject, that my heart is now so full of my friend, that I have forgotten, ah! for ever forgotten, my former childish attachment."

At these words she turned a pair of soft blue eyes, filled with tears, on Tremaine,—who, though he felt much penetrated, was also evidently much troubled.

"You are agitated, Miss Belson!"

"Miss Belson! oh, heavens! I have lost your kindness!"

"Not so! But give me leave to ask, did Captain Monson know of this love of your's *to a degree?*"

"He did," said Eugenia, with fresh agitation at the gravity of Tremaine's manner.

"And has any thing lately passed, that your mother questioned you?"

"Alas! yes! He has succeeded to much property, and is coming here; but it will be of no use."

"And why not?" asked Tremaine, evidently softened, yet with a distance of tone he could not prevent.

"Ah, cruel friend! you know, yet are displeased;" and her agitation became so great, that she covered her face with her hands, and sobbed aloud.

"My dear Eugenia," said Tremaine, quite brought round, "let us not afflict each other; if you love this young soldier——"

"Oh! I do not! Every thing is broken off, and you have taught me what alone I can love. I may not be your's, but never shall I be found the wife of Monson!"

"Ah! if it were so!" exclaimed Tremaine, somewhat off his guard; and then bursting from her, he retreated to his inn, where he shut himself up for the rest of the evening.

He passed it in the most cruel state of anxiety; a cup filled with nepenthe seemed dashed from his lips; the virgin heart, which had appeared ready to bless him, was no longer *virgin*. The image of another was, or at least might be mingled with his; and this child of nature was not so much a child, but that she could take exact measure of the affection she bore to different people.

"Well! and why not?" said he, recovering a little from the agony he had been in—"'Tis true her heart is not absolutely maiden; but what heart at seventeen has not been touched by love? And her honesty is at least unimpaired; it has even shone out the more for this questioning. And why am I not to believe myself preferred? A friend, supposed to be tied up by engagement, is preferred to the free and offered lover!"

The thought pleased.

The night brought a strange, though generous resolution. It was strange; because, if Monson was coming to address her, one would suppose nothing short of madness could induce Tremaine voluntarily to place himself on such unequal terms with his rival, as would be the effect of his persisting in the representation he had made of his engagement. It was generous, because he thought it but right that Eugenia should have full play for her heart, and see this lover again, unshackled by pledge or engagement. For his pride was most essentially concerned, that the professions which had blessed him should not be the effect of a momentary enthusiasm, but the result of free choice, and with the objects of choice fairly before her. In short, he did not choose to owe his success to the absence of his rival.

His resolution, however, fell into the opposite extreme; for he decided upon his own absence, which certainly was not demanded, even by his own principles. He resolved to quit the field for a time, and leave all free to the ex-

ertions of Captain Monson; in which we are compelled to own, that there was neither common sense, nor, to himself, common justice.

He resolved then to depart, without releasing himself, even with Mrs. Belson, from the self-imposed disadvantage, that he was to be considered still as a man not free: nor did the altered manner of that lady tend to shake his resolution; though the tears of Eugenia—amounting to a passion of grief—put his firmness to a much severer trial.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

> Was this the idol that you worship so?
> SHAKSPEARE.

TREMAINE took the road to Limoges, and had scarcely proceeded a mile, before he met a young man, attended by a servant, riding *à franc étrier*, who by his air and costume was English, and whom he rightly judged to be Monson. He surveyed him with interest, as Monson himself stopped to inquire the road to Valence; which Tremaine politely shewed him: pointing out the very smoke of Mrs. Belson's chimneys on the other side of the valley.

There was an intelligent soldier-like air about this young man, but nothing which in Tremaine's thoughts ought to excite his fear, with even all the aid which he had so strangely afforded him against himself. "It will be curious, however," said he, "if I have shewn my rival the very road which he may be taking to ruin me."

From Limoges, where he joined his suite, after above two months' absence, he wrote to Mrs. Belson and Eugenia, announcing his safe arrival, and in express terms asking leave to correspond with his youthful friend.

He received answers from both. Eugenia's was suffi-

ciently characteristic, and partly satisfied him; for it made no mention whatever of Monson, and spoke tenderly of himself. It was remarkable, however, that she made no mention of his request to correspond with her.

Mrs. Belson's letter was more collected, and certainly more cool. She said she had allowed Eugenia to answer him, but earnestly hoped it would be the last letter he might receive from her.

"The more I think," said she, "of your want of freedom, and your duty to your relative, the more I regret our late intimacy. Had you been free, you know how agreeable you were to us; but because we have sinned, do not let us sin on. I have every reason to think Mr. Monson's regard for my daughter is not merely undiminished, but increased: his attentions are most close; and though I am no worldly mother, you must not be surprised, that I endeavour to bring my daughter's mind to a state different from that in which you left it. As it is, she thinks she is sure she still doats upon her friend."

"*Thinks she is sure! still doats!*" exclaimed Tremaine, as he smiled in bitterness at this letter. "No worldly mother! Excuse me, good madam, if I distrust your account of *that* point!"

Upon this he again wrote to Eugenia, and, in evident agitation, requested to take his answer only from herself.

To his mortification, it was a fortnight before he received a reply, and then, such a one as filled him with the most cruel suspicions. The younger, as well as the elder lady, had now begun to see all the impropriety of their former conduct.

"Still are you too dear to me," said Eugenia; "but as to the correspondence, your engagement would present too many impediments to the free course of my heart, to allow of my acceding to it."

Tremaine nearly cursed the whole sex when he read this letter; but recollecting the angelic ingenuousness of the countenance that had charmed him, and all those professions so sweet to his soul, "No!" said he, striking his forehead, "I'll not believe it. She is not herself. It is her mother has done this." With this consoling

thought, he sallied into the town, to examine a present he had ordered for Eugenia, as rich as fancy and money could make it; and finding it finished, dispatched it with a letter to her, which was purposely calculated to bring things to a decision.

In this letter he scrupled not to tell her his fears, that his predictions had been already accomplished, and that Monson had succeeded in his object. His whole style depicted a bosom torn with the most affecting anxieties.

An answer was received as soon as time would permit, but not from Eugenia. She was too much affected, her mother said, to write to him; but Mrs. Belson transmitted to him a note she had written to herself, as the best account she could give of her mind. In this note, after referring to his beautiful present,—which she should ever keep, she said, in remembrance of a man whom she never would deny she had fondly loved,—she owned that Captain Monson's attentions were not disagreeable to her. "Who," said she, "can see his merit, and feel his constancy, and not be alive to them?"

The letter dropped from Tremaine's hand when he read this declaration. He trembled from head to foot; his lips quivered, and a pang seized his heart, which agitated it almost to death.

"Dupe, and fool!" exclaimed he, on recovering a little, "ever to trust the simplicity of nature! It makes me sick! *My* Eugenia! Monson's Eugenia! any body's Eugenia!"

The impression sunk deep, and lasted long; for he found he had dearly and honourably loved this child of romance. To have been so played with, so duped by baby sweetness, even though she might have amused and duped herself at the same time, was a blow which he could not easily forget. But that, with the apparent openness of heaven, with such a charming ingenuousness of temper, she should be so deliberately false in her love, cut him to the heart. Too proud to reproach her, however, and indeed too much ashamed of himself to enter on the subject at all, he in the end contented himself with

simply enclosing her own letter, in a blank cover, and immediately left the Limousin.

The sequel of this adventure is no longer connected with Tremaine's history; but the reader may still like to know what became of the speculation to which our hero felt he had been sacrificed: I will therefore relate it as he learned it from Monson himself.

Returning over the Pyrennees from the tour of Spain, and stopping at Pau to view the birth-place of Henri Quatre, he observed within the precincts of the castle an English gentleman, seemingly on the same errand as himself, whom he presently found to be Monson. Though they had met but for a minute in the rencontre that has been mentioned in Auvergne, their interest about each other had been so great, that upon this second meeting they could not help giving signs of mutual recognition. At first they were formal; but this wearing off, they passed the evening together at the inn, *en vrais compatriotes;* during which, Mrs. Belson and her daughter being naturally made the subject of conversation, Tremaine was astonished to learn that Monson, who had come to France for the express purpose of seeking his early love, had himself broken off with her, upon discovering what had passed between her and Tremaine.

"My heart," said Monson, "was shocked at the sudden transfer of her affections, not merely from me to you, but from you to me; and though I attributed much to her mother, and believed that her inconstancies to us both proceeded more from a temporary ebullition of romance than a want of principle or sordid design; yet, feeling this was not a character that could make me happy, I gave up my pursuit, and left her, in sorrow for her weakness, but with my affection quite cured."

Tremaine could not help admiring his new acquaintance for the delicacy as well as firmness of his character; and when they separated, set it to his own heart as an example which it needed, in recovering itself from the wound it had received. For though forced to withdraw all regard from Eugenia, the affection he had given her

had been so pure, so founded in what he thought her unsophisticated nature, that it was long before, and not till after all esteem for her had ceased, that his heart finally parted with her image.

CHAPTER VIII.

TRAVELLING.

I rather would entreat thy company,
To view the wonders of the world abroad,
Than living dully, sluggardized at home,
Wear out your youth in shapeless idleness.
SHAKSPEARE.

THE immediate effect of this adventure was to throw Tremaine back upon high and polished life, with an increased favour towards it, produced by the disappointment his hopes had just received amidst the simplicities of a humbler station. Hence, when some one had praised the flowers of the valley, he was heard to say,

"Give *me* the diamonds of the court; they are quite as pure, and a thousand times more brilliant! The flowers, too, will fade, and are then even offensive; the purity of the diamond lasts for ever."

Is it not strange, that, with all his powers, attainments, and habits of philosophizing, he had not till now perceived that simplicity is the growth of no particular soil, and attached to no particular rank; that it depends upon character alone; and that, although the chances are against it in a court, the obscurity of the remotest village will not exempt its inhabitants either from disingenuousness, weakness, or falsehood?

Cured of love, and particularly of village love, he now commenced what he had long meditated, and partly had begun,—the tour of Europe; and he betook himself with vigour to the study of the men, manners and institutions, the arts, policy and resources, of foreign countries.

Still, however, whatever his pursuit,—whether in morals, politics, or arts,—his dear romance never abandoned him; and of all the hours that he passed away from his native land, those which were occupied in floating in airy visions on the Rhine, or Lake Leman, were those which he most seemed to enjoy.

In the end, however, the courts of Europe, and all its princes, its eminent men and celebrated women, became known to him; though, with regard to the latter, while he bowed to the supereminent genius, and revelled in the brilliant eloquence of a Staël, he personally preferred the unpretending sense, the genuine humour, the amiable and beneficent practical virtues of an Edgworth.

Indeed, every thing masculine, even though it were her sense, he held to be a derogation from the female character.

"We would forgive you," he has been known to say to the daughter of Necker, "being so much wiser than ourselves; but with such wisdom, we cannot forgive your petticoats."

As it was, however, the study of men, not women, which now engaged Tremaine's attention, it signified little under what appearance the feminine character was clothed.

It is true, his politeness in female society never abandoned him; but his heart no longer expanded to female worth; and by degrees the avidity with which politics and war were followed all over the Continent, communicated itself to him, and his correspondence with his political friends at home was pursued with energy.

This threw him, on his return to England, into party, and, as he was in parliament, into opposition; for, besides that his connexions were most of them on that side, the minister, whether it was that he knew not Tremaine's value, or despaired of fixing him, or that he trusted too much to his own popularity, did not take sufficient pains to acquire his support.

Tremaine, indeed, forbade all possibility of even making the attempt; for he was at pains to have it believed that he stood by himself, owned fealty to no one, and would

take it as an affront to be solicited into party. It so happened, however, that he thought this independence could only be shewn by invariably voting, and frequently speaking with his vote, against every measure, good, bad, or indifferent, which the government brought forward.

The minister, a man of spirit and talents,* attacked him for this with a ridicule he could not forgive; and this drove him into the arms of opposition, as many a man had been driven before him, contrary to his original intention. In short, he fancied himself a patriot, and that he was associated with patriots; and with a profession, in which he believed himself sincere, that he would never be found in the ranks of an undiscriminating opposition, and that measures, not men, were always the object to which he looked, he ran breast-high into every measure, not only of opposition, but of faction itself.

The opposition, indeed, held out terms to him which could not be refused; for they not only practised upon his proneness to think things wrong, but upon his equally strong proneness to believe that he was born to set them right.

He caught at this, and in a little time was admitted into their councils. But though his station, his attainments, and his integrity, entitled him to a place in those councils, in other respects he soon found himself less qualified than he had supposed. Some of the leaders played double; others went farther than he intended to go with them; and some entered the opposition merely to enhance their price with the government.

As he was sincere in his wish to act up to his principle, he complied with the demands of his party to give them his voice as well as his vote; and for this in many things he was excellently qualified: for he had a very noble air, and a manner not either less interesting or less commanding from its being tinged with melancholy. His voice was both sweet and sonorous, his language polished, and his taste classical. Perhaps it was too much so; for

* From the dates, I presume Mr. Perceval is the minister alluded to.—Ed.

he sometimes failed from the mere circumstance of being too anxious *not* to do so.

He was, in fact, too easily disgusted with himself, as well as with others; and was frequently not a little piqued at seeing a coarse, and even a vulgar orator succeed in arresting the attention of the house, in consequence of the total indifference he felt whether he succeeded or not. It was under these circumstances, in connexion with others of a similar nature, which need not be particularized, that Tremaine had long meditated a retreat from public life. We will not, however, say that this measure would have been so soon adopted as it was, but for some peculiar mortifications and disappointments, both to his feelings and his principles, which his ill fate had destined him still to undergo.

It has been said, indeed, by some, that about this time he suffered new disappointments in another "affair of the heart;" by others, that *he* was the disappointer, and that he had used a young lady of rank—what is called *ill.* Of this, perhaps, more hereafter. As to the fact, it is certain, that though his heart was a sufferer, and a cruel one, it was in a manner and with a party far different from what is usually understood when an affair of the *heart* is mentioned; for the disappointment was with one of his own sex; and politics and friendship, not love, sustained the wound.

In a word, one of the leaders of his party, a man not only of the highest rank and attainments, but of a nature seemingly, and perhaps really, so amiable and sincere, that to enjoy his confidence, and be distinguished by his friendship, was the pride and honour of Tremaine's life, —this man failed him.

It was in one of those negociations for an arrangement of the government, which the highest power in the state fondly thought might reconcile all jarring interests, and heal the wounds of his distracted country, that a blow was given to Tremaine's best feelings, which finally sickened and disgusted him with public life. What is worse, it turned even his private friendship into bitter-

ness, and made him renounce his confidence in man, as before he had renounced it in woman.

And yet, so great had been his love for this man, that he almost shed tears on discovering (as he did within a week of professions which went to the bottom of Tremaine's heart) that he had misrepresented him to the Regent, undervalued his weight and services, and coolly appropriated to an upstart flatterer that which he had actually promised to the independent Tremaine.

Let not the reader misunderstand. These were not sordid feelings. Tremaine's grief was not occasioned by the loss of a prospect of office, the emoluments of which were as nothing to him. But his heart loved the man who had deceived him. Had he been the victim of a common-place character (as indeed he was of the intrigue of a subaltern time-serving parasite), he could have laughed at the paltry excuses that were made in answer to his just remonstrances on this ill treatment. But, as we have observed, he had loved the injurer for many real virtues, for long-tried honour in the world, and long-tried friendship towards himself; and when he found that even such a man had failed and forgotten him, it went to his very heart. At first, he thought he had fallen into some error concerning him, or at best that he was merely capricious; and, being open and confiding himself, he sought explanations, which he thought would instantly restore things to their old level. But he was shocked to find that the man he had so loved took refuge from his advances in coldness; and the few explanations he condescended to make were of a nature so frivolous, so bordering, indeed, upon equivocation, that something very like indignation and haughty reproach on Tremaine's part marked their separation. The feeling was not diminished by seeing this person fall immediately under the government of the upstart above-mentioned, who had wound about his naturally honourable mind, by a train of the most obsequious flattery, to which, it need not be observed, Tremaine neither would nor could condescend.

The result was, that he almost pitied while he renounced him: and though, we repeat, he might have

been disposed to laugh at a person less richly endowed than the one in question, yet, when he reflected on *who* had deceived him, he

Wept to think that Atticus was he.

In the end, the negociation for power which produced this separation failed, and the deceiving parties were themselves disappointed. But Tremaine never forgot their treatment; and from that hour, as has been said, to effect a retreat from a world in which he seemed to have been betrayed both by man and woman, became his favourite wish.

CHAPTER IX.

HE RESOLVES TO RETIRE.

This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods,
I better brook than flourishing peopled towns.
SHAKSPEARE.

TREMAINE'S wish for retirement was not a little fostered by the course of his former reading, and, as far as he could understand himself, by the inclination of his taste. He had been bred a scholar. Homer, Horace, Virgil, and Theocritus were familiar to him; and in the closet of the student of divinity and of law, and even in the tent of the soldier, they had soothed and flattered his imagination.

Horace, in particular, had always been a congenial favourite; especially as, besides being a poet, he also gave himself to politics, and associated with public men: and many an alarm to Tremaine's pride had been assuaged, and many a fit of virtuous indignation encouraged, by the Sabine Field, and the

Oh! rus, quando ego te aspiciam!

But the "Tusculanum Fundum" of Cicero, and the magnificent "Laurentinum" of Pliny (both of whom,

at times, were retired statesmen as well as philosophers), charmed his imagination still more than "Lucretilis," or the "Tiburni Lucus:" and as his habits had become expensive, not to say voluptuous, and in the extreme of modern elegance, he resolved upon combining the mental philosophy of Horace with the personal magnificence of the Roman consuls.

He pitched, therefore, upon Belmont as his retreat; and with this view enlarged and decorated it at considerable expense, as more romantic and picturesque in situation, and fitter therefore for his purpose, than the more ancient and respectable, but less elegant mansion, in a more distant county, which had always been the seat of his fathers.

There have not been wanting persons who said that it was to this distance in the latter, rather than to the natural beauty of the former, that the choice was owing; for Yorkshire was too far removed from those scenes of politics after which he still hankered, and to which he thought it possible he might still be forced to return: this, however, is what was said by others.

Be this as it may, he announced Belmont as the seat of his retirement from a world he was resolved to abandon; and felt no diminution of his resolution, in planning, at an enormous cost, the elegant scene of his future studies, future independence, and future happiness. It was here he resolved, in his favourite phrase, to view the world at a distance.

With these prospective pleasures, duties, and occupations, Tremaine gave a farewell dinner to a large yet select company of his friends, in which professors of politics, professors of *belles-lettres*, and professors of good breeding were pleasantly mixed. The *savoir vivre* shone out on this occasion with a splendour seldom equalled; and it was observed that the master of the feast was never less listless or splenetic, and never seemingly in such good-humour with the world, as while thus in the act of taking leave of it for ever.

CHAPTER X.

THE FIRST MORNING OF RETIREMENT.

Omitting the sweet benefit of Time.
SHAKSPEARE.

We left Tremaine on a sleepless and feverish pillow; which he thought was peculiarly unfortunate, as it might defeat the purposed commencement of his happiness the next day. Not that early rising had been one of his habits, particularly after his accession to fortune. The morning, therefore, after his arrival at Belmont, found the sun up, and the business of the house begun, several hours before he was stirring.

This threw every thing else behind-hand. But as he had nothing but what he forced himself to do, it was of little consequence, he conceived, to himself, and still less to others, at what time it was done. If, indeed, by chance or necessity, he rose earlier than usual, he confessed that the early morning was a fine thing; but a rule upon it defeated the freedom, and therefore the happiness of man, particularly of philosophic man; and he was often known to wonder at the general, but what he called the unreal, cheerfulness of many of his inferiors, who had ready-made rules for the employment of their time, and were forced to rise, eat, and sleep as others commanded. If there was a command in the case, he said, he knew no difference as to whether it was imposed by one's-self or by others.

At the moment we speak of, after sleeping little, he rose late, and complained of indisposition. This was always a reason for lying long; but this did not cause the indisposition to go off. A medical friend had assured him, indeed, that his system was wrong, and that in these cases, if he rose early and tasted the morning air, it would do him more good than all the drugs in the world. In vain!—His imagination told him this was beautiful in

poetry, but, like most of the simple pleasures, it was only there that it was beautiful.

Hence it was unusually late when he appeared at breakfast, where his valet informed him that his steward had been in waiting all the morning, to take his orders, and give in his accounts.

These accounts were of considerable magnitude, and the steward attended at the very moment by his express order, sent before he left town; one of his resolutions being, by a prompt and decisive exertion, to put an end to a complicated business, which by a large arrear had fallen into difficulties, and which in London, he said, he had neither time nor patience to unravel.

His valet also informed him that his principal bailiff, who presided over a farm of a thousand acres, which he had taken into his own hands, waited, at the same time, to make report and take directions.

"It's very vexatious," said he, "that I'm always indisposed when these men come. I've no head for figures just now; nor can I understand farm reports, without being an eye-witness."

Wilson, the steward, was therefore appointed the next day; and Nutting, the bailiff, was ordered to wait till his master should know whether he could ride or not.

The bailiff, it is true, ventured to propose a remonstrance, or rather petition, that the inspection might be deferred, as it would take some hours; and he was to meet a grazier by appointment, at Northampton, who was ready to contract for some cattle, which it had hitherto been difficult to dispose of, and which were now there for sale. But Monsieur Dupuis refused to take any such message from a man whom he considered and often called *un tas de fumier*, in the same spirit as he bestowed upon Wilson the epithet of *cue de plomb*. He indeed indignantly told Nutting, that his master could not wait the time of a grazier. The cattle, therefore, were not sold, and the bailiff remained in attendance.

The elegance of Tremaine's breakfast did not tempt him to eat; but this he laid upon his feverish night, without much inquiry how he came by it. He said, how-

ever, he would read it off, and enjoy himself immediately in that learned retirement, for which in London he had so long sighed. He therefore proceeded to the library.

Here Tremaine feasted his eyes with the sight of all the admirable contrivances of desk, cushion, &c., by which men who profess reading endeavour to court themselves into a liking for what they profess. He had done this for some time, and given much praise to his upholsterer, as well as his bookseller, before he recollected that he had made a small omission, in not having settled any particular subject to which he might give his mind. But as he was in no very good humour with the world, moral philosophy was his ostensible aim; and the ancient philosophers, in splendid editions, all lying before him, with a sensation of some pleasure he opened a Laertius.

"It is delightful," said he, "to pursue the varieties in which these men displayed their wisdom; to contemplate and unravel with them the nature of man!" He turned over the pages for some time, and read *something* of several very contending systems: but though occupied, and therefore comparatively happy, he hurried over, rather than examined, the tenets that were explained; found fault, as he had done an hundred times, with all that was said of virtue or developed of nature, by Pythagoras, or Plato, or Epicurus; thought Aristotle not sufficiently precise; and ended, as he had often done before, in the satisfaction of scepticism.

His conclusion was not pleasant, though he had taken such pains to come to it. "Arcesilaus, and Carneades, and Cicero," said he, closing the book, "were certainly right; and the only true thing on earth is, that there is no such thing as truth." At the same time it did not escape him that he had not quite consumed three hours in coming to this conclusion, and that the systems which he then condemned remaining exactly in the same state of superficial examination in which he had left them many a time before, promising his own mind to return to them when he had more leisure. In particular, it did not escape him that all the modern theories, founded on a more exact knowledge of nature, and a more clear reve-

lation of all that is held sacred by man, had been entirely and almost purposely avoided. His eye grew a little bilious as he thought of this, and glanced cursorily over the volumes of Boyle, Butler, Sherlock, and Clark, which were arranged in their places on his ample shelves. "I have not time at present," said he, "to push this subject, but I shall have full leisure for it while in this happy retreat. Leisure!" (continued he, looking at a Milton that lay open before him) "yes! 'retired leisure'

That in trim gardens takes his pleasure.

This room is, after all, too dark, and the weather is close. Give me sweet poetry and a garden! these are at least more certain in their impressions. I will pass the rest of the morning in the alcove!" At these words he left the house by a private way, with a Milton under his arm; meaning, as he said, not merely to read, but to study the greater poem of that author once more; a thing he had not done for fifteen years. His finger, however, remained at the passage in the Penseroso, which had involuntarily, as it were, caused his last sensation. It was therefore by no means unnatural, before he underwent the task of taxing his imagination in heaven or hell, to rest a little in the sweet fields of familiar description, which first brought the author to his mind. In a word, he had read over the Penseroso, and part of the Allegro, when he found, though his faculties of vision read, his thoughts wandered; and instead of the tale of the shepherd, the song of the lark, and Thestyllis and Phillis, both his eye and his ear were in the House of Commons.

"Strange!" said he, "that what once could please, even to rapture, should not please again! Whence is it, that in London, surrounded by a vexatious crowd, I sighed for such a retreat as this, where I might suspect no man's sincerity, and study nature in her most pleasing attire; and here, where I have her, and can compare the delightful original with the copy, that the banquet should fail. Alas! how has every banquet failed me through life!" His brow clouded, he left the alcove, and striking into a covered walk, seemed lost in no pleasing medita-

tion ; when he beheld at the end of it several of his servants in noisy mirth, from sheer and absolute want of employment. "The boors!" said he, "they and their amusement are fitted for one another ; and very fit it is they should not know more happiness than is their present lot." He did not, however, interrupt their occupations, but turned to a gate which led to some fields.

They were pleasant fields, and in the full joy of the harvest ; but on the same principle he avoided these also ; observing to himself, that what belonged to the mere animal man was not what he had come to seek. Yet the cheerfulness they presented in the troops of labourers of both sexes, many of whom sang as they loaded the wains with the subsistence of the coming year, might have unbent a mind less sensitive than his.

At one time, indeed, he had nearly entered one of the fields, (no great condescension in its master, one would think!) when he turned off, murmuring something of "riot, and ill-managed merriment, stirred up among loose unlettered hinds," and justified his want of interest in this simple scene, by asking himself why he had made these lawns, these private glades, if, after all, he was to pace the rough uneven fields.

> The dull swain (said he)
> Treads on them daily with his clouten shoon!—

Thus wandered, and thus seemed lost, Tremaine, in a paradise of his own creating.

His eye now moved to the lofty scite of Belmont, and at first he was pleased with its grandeur ; but observing that its white buildings glared too much in the sun, which was not sufficiently softened by the extensive but young plantations, which immediately surrounded it, "It would have been better, perhaps," said he, "if I had built lower down in the old wood."

That thought was not pleasant either, for thousands had been spent in enlarging a seat originally small, and where the famlly, as we have said, had never regularly lived.

The soil on the summit was of sand, and bore nothing

but pines; and some naked rock, upon which pines refused to grow, gave it thus early a very bleak and exposed appearance. What it would be in the winter, Tremaine did not like to ask himself.

"If I had gone to Yorkshire!" said he, with the air of a man who thinks he has made a false step!—

The ample and venerable seat he had abandoned,—ancient, indeed, but where every thing was in character, every thing sheltered, a rich soil, and oaks of two hundred years,—all came before him.

He did not much like to pursue the train! nevertheless it haunted him. The village where he had passed much of his youth, its old church, and, above all, several old families that attended it, who had always been linked with his; these unaccountably thronged on his fancy. He recollected the hilarity, at least, if not the happiness of those days, and some honest faces met his mind's eye, to which, though he had not thought of them for many a year, he had always, when he did think of them, annexed the ideas of friendship towards his family and himself.

"How small is my acquaintance in this country!" observed he, looking at the horizon, and casting his eye over a paling, which he had now reached.

The loneliness of an extended and sandy plain, which Belmont on one side overlooked, particularly struck him; for the roads led to places with whose very names he was not familiar.

"Yet, what if it is small,"—he continued, turning up into a dark walk—"how weak and ignoble is man if he cannot suffice to himself! The people I am thinking of in Yorkshire may be all in reality boors, who have never been out of their own country, and know nothing of the world. It is certain our ideas of all things change, and why not these?"

At this time, a servant who had sought him, announced a visiter in Mr. Melcombe, a gentleman of moderate estate, who had scarcely ever been out of the neighbourhood, and who lived only a few miles off.

"Is it possible," said Tremaine, "that I am to be plagued already with the natives!"

He would have excused himself; but the servant told him he had said he was at home, and Mr. Melcombe was at that instant searching for him.

"Ill-bred enough," said Tremaine, peevishly.

Mr. Melcombe was one of those characters which are still to be found among the gentry of this country, and which prevailed formerly much more than at present. He was born to a competent estate, on which he lived, and on which his ancestors, to a remote degree, had lived before him. His father cultivated almost the whole of it himself, and he exactly followed the steps of his father.

Tremaine, who knew merely that he was a neighbouring Squire, almost trembled when he observed him on the lawn. A single-breasted riding coat, narrow brim and high-crown to his hat, very long breeches with plentiful strings, and very short boots with plentiful straps, designated, beyond mistake, this first visiter of the refined Tremaine. It need scarcely be said how ill-suited such a pair as this were to each other; and after a not very long colloquy, which, however, seemed any thing but short to both, they separated, each impressed with no very favourable opinion of the other.

"Good Heavens!" said Tremaine, as he shut his library door after the disappearance of his self-invited guest, "is *this* my nearest neighbour, and to be one of my companions!"

"A queer fellow this, for all his fine house!" said Melcombe, as he trotted home; "however, don't let us judge too hastily; they say he's an honest man."

And so he was, and so was Melcombe. Which had the advantage in other respects, is a problem I must leave the reader to solve.

CHAPTER XI.

OCCUPATION.

My library, a dukedom large enough!

SHAKSPEARE.

TREMAINE, now alone, and the full master of the rest of his time, was yet forced to debate how to dispose of it.

"The train of reflection," said he, "once broken, it is not always so easy to recover one's thoughts;" and he walked up and down the room in vexation.

What the reflections were upon which this inroad had been committed, he did not ask himself; and though it wanted full three hours to dinner, although Nutting still waited, and he was actually at a loss how to employ the interval, he declared that Melcombe had utterly ruined his whole day. The farm inspection was therefore postponed, and the bailiff dismissed. The rest of the day, or rather daylight, was spent in planning a different arrangement of his books: to which he resolved to apply with redoubled ardour as soon as that arrangement should be completed; and with this to invigorate expectation, the evening again fixed him at table, from which, though alone, he did not rise till midnight.

During the morning, his eagerness to take full possession of his independence, together with his recent arrival, had made him indifferent to the contents of his post: an indifference which I know not whether he properly characterised in calling it philosophic. Certain it is, that his coffee now received additional zest from being accompanied by the newspapers, which he perused with more than usual interest: particularly some well-written invectives against the minister, and the hopes held out of a truly patriotic (that is, of a *new*) administration.

The next day, however, and two days afterwards, were entirely devoted to the new classsification of his library,

during the arrangement of which, we may suppose that reading was not the use which he made of his books. Yet of prospective reading he thought so much, particularly as great and interesting subjects were classed in a sort of *ordre raisonné* under his hands, that no amusement, and even no duty, could tempt him from the urgent employment. His farm and his accounts were alike neglected; his grounds were looked at from the windows, and his horses exercised by the grooms.

And was he happy?—By comparison he was, for he was interested; and though his temper seemed unaccountably tried in the trifling difficulties he encountered from incompatible subjects and discordant sizes in the objects of his labours, still the day passed rapidly off; and over the evening libation (for the libation was repeated), and particularly over the evening Gazettes (a variety of which on all sides of the question, it was observed, he collated with great exactness), he congratulated himself upon the full enjoyment of his purpose,—of viewing the world at a distance.

A fortnight had now seen him at Belmont, but, with the exception of Mr. Melcombe, had seen nobody else; for since the inroad of that gentleman, his orders were, to be generally denied. Nevertheless, he condescended to a daily inspection of a visiting-book, which, being so lately arrived, he had directed to be kept. The entries, indeed, were few; but (as he observed) this was more fortunate for his wishes than he could have hoped, particularly as it saved much trouble in returning visits.

In all this he was to himself sincere; and in the last remark, really so; for not only fastidiousness, but indolence, increased; for which latter it must be owned, as time passed on, there was but too much opportunity. His horses, indeed, were regularly brought to the door, but the least cloud was sure to send them back again; and at length, the trouble of pulling on his boots growing formidable, they were altogether laid aside.

We may suppose that this total abstraction from every thing but his books, was at least crowned with the acquisition of the philosophic knowledge he sought, and that

his inquiries were profound, his discoveries certain. But truth lay deeper than he imagined; or, Proteus-like, she put on various shapes; and when he thought, as he sometimes did, that he was on the point of binding her captive, she was sure always to elude and tempt him, under a new form, into a new pursuit.

Perhaps he embarrassed himself with too great a variety of subjects. He had planned (for he was fertile in plans) a comparison of the whole philosophy of the ancients with modern theology; in which latter, as we have hinted, his tenets were by no means happy. Natural and moral evil forced him to natural philosophy, which he had formerly neglected, because Boyle, he said, prosed. Some of the divines, too (for it was necessary to examine divines), sent him to the fathers, and to ecclesiastical history,—the uncertainties and discredits cast upon some part of which he, with his usual felicity, extended to all.

He endeavoured for a time to take refuge in Bolingbroke and Shaftesbury, in Bayle and Voltaire. But though they easily helped him to pull down, there was something within him that prevented his building up, at least on such foundations as they were able to lay. In short, all was doubt and uncertainty; and as to doubt is not always to be happy, the subject generally became distasteful. And yet he was ashamed to relinquish it altogether,—which would have looked like defeat; and was mortified and displeased with himself to find that, with all his pains, he could not make out what others assured him in their theories they understood perfectly well.

In the wanderings, too, which he found himself frequently obliged to make, he often discovered that he was in the midst of the world again; for Bolingbroke and Swift took him by the half-hour at a time into the vortex of Queen Anne's reign; and the life of Walpole, and a collection of party tracts were at least as frequently open before him, as Plato or Tully, Leibnitz or Locke. Shakspeare, too, and still oftener Ariosto,—as more suited in method (or rather in want of it) to his roving

taste,—were the objects of his desultory visits. But his mind became fatigued, without being filled; and this, added to the humours of increasing indolence, generally left him, at the close of the day, ill in health and peevish in temper.

At length he shut up his library altogether; but only, as he had sometimes said before, for a time,—meaning to return to it with redoubled application, after he had given the necessary attention to some affairs which had long called for his inspection, and would be put off no longer. These were his farm, and a lawsuit connected with it.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHARMS OF AGRICULTURE.

> And now hath he land and beeves.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

THE farm we have alluded to in the last chapter was one which Tremaine had taken into his own hands, at a time when, contemplating his retreat, he thought it right to anticipate all the profitable and useful employments in which a great country gentleman ought to be occupied. By profitable, we do not mean that he thought he was to enrich himself. It was the duty, he said, of all great land-holders to improve the soil, for the sake of the country of which they form so much more ostensible and important a part, than the overgrown monied interest; for which latter he felt no veneration. Accordingly, that the estate he proposed to cultivate consisted of a bad, and almost untameable soil, gave him little concern. The Marquis de Turbilly, *Sur le Défrichement des Terres*, was for a time his favourite reading, together with Chateauneuf, Tull, Arthur Young, and every one of those authors besides, who have repeated one another for the last thirty years; till, in a few months,

without having ever known a country life, except where it

> Lives in description and looks green in song,

he arranged in idea a whole plan of rural industry: and as the great Lord Townshend, after a life of great political consequence, had the good fortune to be almost the father of the new husbandry by his improvements in Norfolk, so Tremaine intended to follow his example, and emulate his fame, in Northamptonshire.

It did not escape him, either, that Mr. Pitt, after he had laid down his power, had also directed his strong mind to agriculture in his retreat.

Let no one, however, at least no one who is not more obstinate of purpose than our hero, count upon pursuing long what has been inconsiderately resolved.

He had built a thrashing-machine to go by water, where little water was to be had. A stream was turned to remedy the defect, and it was remedied, but at the expense of a lawsuit, in which Mr. Tremaine was cast. He laid the blame, first upon his counsel, and then upon his agent. The first said they could not proceed for want of instructions; the last, that he could not procure instructions for want of leisure in his master.

His mind now began to ruminate more than ever upon the scenes he had quitted, and a comparison of what he had exchanged with what he had embraced: and he has since very frankly owned, that the disappointments of the country would have probably sent him back to the disappointments of the town, if he had not, precisely at that moment, received a very flattering letter from one of the heads of his party, opening to him the scheme of operations they intended to adopt against the minister during the next session, and inviting him to come up and share in the anticipated success. The letter flattered him into good-humour; the defeat in the lawsuit was forgotten; and after a very complacent meditation, of a whole day's continuance, he sat down to a long and eloquent ebullition (in every word of which he thought himself sincere) upon the impossibility of the

world's satisfying a mind like his; upon the charms of his retirement, which, he said, were never-fading, and the little probability there was, with a disposition so fixed, that he should be able to give that assistance to the cause, which his friends in their partiality thought him capable of affording. He concluded with assuring his friend, that if he would come to visit him, he would find him

Tacitum Sylvas inter reptare salubres
Curantem quicquid dignum sapiente bonoque est

For a few days after this, Tremaine was in his glory:—the glory of having demonstrated the strength of his principles, and of having given the most incontestable proofs of the philosophic temper of his mind, by refusing to return to the world. He went back, therefore, awhile to his library, lived with the good Duke and Jacques, in the forest of Ardennes, and felicitated himself upon being one of those

Who, hid in desert inaccessible,
Under the shade of melancholy boughs,
Lose and neglect the creeping hours of time.

But the magic soon dissolved. His party friend did not answer his letter; yet the greatest activity prevailed in politics, and a partial coalition was talked of; to be included in which he had forfeited all pretension. It was evident he was not thought of, and he practically felt, that though "the world forgetting" might appear a very soothing sentiment to some minds, the same minds might not always be equally soothed by the reflection, that they were

By the world forgot.

CHAPTER XIII.

ENNUI.

I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercise.

SHAKSPEARE.

TREMAINE's listleness, not to say peevishness, now increased. To return to serious study was impossible, and the hours were too long to be filled by light and wandering reading,—which, as a principal occupation, he found could scarcely amuse, much less give substantial satisfaction. The time hung equally heavy, under the desultory and unimportant employments with which less sensible or less ardent minds can fill up the longest day. He once or twice, before the season closed, ventured upon shooting. He had the best dogs, but they knew and would obey nobody but the game-keeper; and as they gave him, therefore, no sort of interest, their sagacity and courage afforded him little pleasure. He had the best gun: but as it had scarcely been used, it presented no associations, and he surveyed it as a mere tube of metal, which could inflict death at a distance. It had no tale to tell of well-hunted fields, of game manfully pursued, and skilfully brought down. He took it up, and laid it aside with indifference.

As to fishing—he had rods, nets, and harpoons, without number: and what was more, he had read with delight in Walton's Angler. But he knew nothing of the art, or of the nature of the prey he was to seek; and when he did make two or three attempts to interest himself in the sport, he found that his thoughts were more in London, or at best with a book, than with his float. He therefore soon took leave of angling, not without wondering at his father's taste and disposition, which could be charmed and satisfied by so monotonous a pursuit.

Gardening, however, promised to furnish a rich fund

of occupation. It was the appropriate amusement, nay, often the support, of a true philosopher. There was nothing on which his fancy had ever fixed with truer pleasure. Besides, he knew all that had been ever said upon it by any body. Bacon, and Cowley, and Temple, and Lord Orford; the count, the chevalier, and the prior,* and the old Corycian of Virgil, were often quoted, and as often envied, whenever this natural and delightful art occurred to his imagination. Yet, in reality, of a garden Tremaine had no other idea than as a place to walk in, furnished with a terrace always ready for his steps, and full of sweet sights and sweet smells. But to watch, to assist, or even to understand the process of nature; to class roots and plants, to divide bulbs or gather seeds, or graft or to prune, never occurred to him, except as the *troubles* attendant on gardening. Botany was too finical for his full mind; and even Sir William Temple's pride in his peaches could never induce his attention to fruit-trees. All this, he said, was more properly the province of servants, who were paid for it, and who must necessarily understand it better; it was the mechanical part, and he left it to mechanics. The consequence was, that he often lounged from walk to walk, with a glazed and unobserving eye; and as every thing about him arose from the labours of others, he surveyed it with that total want of interest which usually attends other men's labour.

It is to be recollected, that one of the motives for Tremaine's retiring was to render himself useful, and obtain influence in his country. This, if not a view to personal weight with his neighbours, of course placed him in the commission. To this he at first obliged himself to give some attention. But though Burn, and Williams, and the Statutes were always at hand, and were even sometimes consulted in a large and appropriate apartment, which he called the justice-room, their minutiæ discouraged, and their forms teased, by requiring more of his attention than he had ever thought necessary.

* See the *Spectacle de la Nature.*

His mind was always upon other things; his clerk lived too far off; and he not only blundered, but, had he been ever so correct, correctness in such trifling points could confer no honour, and therefore no satisfaction. Melcombe beat him out of the field in the estimation of the neighbourhood; and as to joining in a petty sessions, and dining with little esquires at a country inn, it filled him with horror.

Once, and once only, he drove in his coach and four to the general quarter sessions, where he found many of his inferiors who eclipsed, and much noisy jollity which disgusted him. He did not repeat the visit.

And now behold Tremaine, with all the advantages of fortune, education, and birth—with various talents, and an inquiring, and in many respects a powerful mind—with a generous heart, a high sense of honour, and in the vigour of his age! And yet, with all these, he not only was not, but could not be happy; and the causes of his unhappiness were not difficult to point out. An unbending, perhaps a too sensitive temper, had been originally left to itself, without any efforts being made to correct it; and a warm imagination had mistaken the ebullitions of fancy for the real and vivid impressions of natural disposition. He had indeed seen something almost like adversity; but it is not always true that adversity corrects:—too often it confirms our errors. And Tremaine falling suddenly upon prosperity without having profited by experience, basked in it, until he grew more and more sophisticated, and lost whatever ideas he had once possessed of the *simplicity* of nature.

The only certainty he now felt was, that he was uneasy; and though he still told himself he loved retirement, and disliked the world as much as ever, it was evident that his life was irksome, and he wished to be relieved. Luckily, at this time he began to be ill. A slow feverishness hung constantly upon him, and by degrees tended to jaundice all things to his natural vision, as his mistakes about himself had already misrepresented them to his mental. He felt that something must be done.

CHAPTER XIV.

HE FLIES.

> Good Sir, I do in friendship counsel you
> To leave this place.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

It was now that soft season,

> When descending showers
> Call forth the greens, and wake the rising flowers;
> When opening buds salute the welcome day,
> And earth, relenting, feels the genial ray.

In more homely language, it was spring; and the spring is generally the signal for happiness. The birds, the animals, the lovely vegetation of the earth, obey with spontaneous gladness the pleasing call. But the spring brought no charms to Tremaine. Nine months had, in fact, languished on, without conferring upon him nine hours of that pure enjoyment which he had so confidently promised himself; and though the first principle of philosophy (so valuable that it is supposed to have required an oracle for its revelation) is to "Know thyself," yet that he and solitude were not formed for each other was a discovery he had still to make.

And yet he had frequently to observe people as solitary as himself, who seemed happy, although they had no books to engage them, no trains of thought to pursue. His shepherd passed whole days on the hills without languor or complaint, and without being ill; and the village cobler, in a stall near his gate, was so cheerful, that Tremaine not unfrequently stopt to observe him. There were moments, even, when, if he would have allowed it, he could have envied his lot. How long he would have continued to force nature in a way of life which it was evident he did not understand, is very doubtful; but luckily, as has been said, he was now seriously ill, and his illness obliged him to have recourse to a phy-

sician. Luckily, also, the physician was a very sensible man, and his friend as well as his physician. This gentleman soon found that his disease did not so much depend upon medicine, as a change of scene, or rather of life; and he was adroit enough to enforce his opinion without discovering it to his patient. In a word, having called upon Tremaine one morning, he found him in his closet, with at least half a score letters in the same hand unopened before him; and having observed upon the quantity of business he must have, to occasion so large a receipt of paper by one post, he was astonished to find from his patient (who very frankly avowed it) that it was not the arrival of a single day, but the accumulation of as many posts as there were letters. Expressing surprise at their being unopened, it was increased by being told, that as they were all from his steward in the north, he had given way (engaged, he said, by other things) to an unwillingness to be broken in upon so frequently by such affairs, and had therefore reserved them for a rainy day, when one trouble might suffice for them all.

It needed not the sagacity of his adviser to see at once that indolence was at the bottom of his patient's complaints; and according to the great maxim of his science, *Causa remota tollitur effectus,* he advised his instant perusal of every one of his letters. In vain the patient pleaded that he was too ill—the plea was not allowed; the letters were read, and, to his dismay, he discovered that from his delay in answering the first two or three packets, some affairs of serious consequence to his estates in Yorkshire were growing worse and worse, so as to require his almost immediate presence.

The friendly and disinterested Dr. Asgill seized upon this decisive moment to enforce what he had sometimes before suggested in vain; and having now the plea of necessary business, and his pride being no longer affected by his departure from solitude, it was determined that within three days Tremaine should leave the spot chosen for his happiness, and visit, for a time at least, the seat where his ancestors had been happy.

Accordingly, his barouche and four post-horses con-

veyed the feverish recluse to the scenes of his youth, those happy scenes, and that happy time,

> When nature pleas'd, for life itself was new,
> And the heart promis'd what the fancy drew.

To say that he was not struck, if not exhilarated by the busy and cheerful images which a journey through a flourishing and beautiful country in the month of May furnished, would be to suppose him more jaundiced than he really was. How he came to be jaundiced at all was what surprised and puzzled him: and his friendly physician, though his knowledge of the world, as well as of his art, made him very well understand it, was restrained by that knowledge from too openly explaining it.

It was evening when he arrived at Woodington Hall, that ancient mansion where his father was born, and where he himself had passed his infancy. It would wrong him to say his pulse did not beat somewhat quicker as he beheld its crenelated towers and high chimnies, the latter in themselves containing materials for a moderate modern house. They rose loftily, amid still more lofty trees, now fresh clothed; and the lattices of many an ample window of the mansion played in the horizontal sun.

Several workmen preparing to return home filled the great court, and saluted him as he drove up to the porch; and in some among them he thought he recognized, under their grey hairs, features he had known in his youth. "I will make acquaintance with these good people," said he, "*to-morrow.*"

He had not for a long time felt so much himself; certainly no hour at Belmont had given him half the satisfaction; and though the dread of the labours that awaited him, in the business he came upon, hung like a weight over him during the evening, he passed it with an alertness, in visiting the gardens without, and the chambers within, to which he had long been a stranger.

CHAPTER XV

AN OLD FRIEND.

Horatio, or I do forget myself!—
The same, my Lord, and your poor servant ever.
SHAKSPEARE.

In the morning a letter was brought him by a servant on horseback, who said it came from a neighbouring clergyman, Dr. Evelyn. It gave him joy of his arrival, and announced the intention of the writer to visit him, whenever his illness, of which he had heard, would permit.

This Dr. Evelyn was a reverend divine, who was both the rector and squire of the neighbouring parish, and between whose family and Tremaine's had subsisted a friendship of at least a century. He was a few years Tremaine's senior, but not so much so as to have prevented their being almost playmates in earlier days; and as the doctor had been a great favourite at Woodington, and almost constantly there, there had been a sort of unequal alliance between them; in which the elder, perceiving and appreciating much merit in the younger, had afforded protection, which the younger repaid with deference.

During Tremaine's professional studies, this intimacy had been further cultivated by correspondence; but his avocations confining him to London, and Evelyn having travelled some years abroad, by degrees it dropped, as many a correspondence has dropped before, without any diminution of esteem on either side.

Tremaine's later life, however, had been so totally different from Evelyn's, that he might be almost said to have forgotten him, except when any particular circumstance brought him to his memory; when he always thought of him with pleasure and esteem.

Evelyn had been a second son, and was bred a scholar, and (by choice) a churchman. He had a critical mind

and acute powers of reasoning, which fixed his faith where his heart most wished it. They also, it was said, made him not indisposed to that collision with another man's understanding, known by the name of argument; in which, though always persevering, and sometimes dogmatical, he was not unfrequently playful, and never uncivil. To say truth, he loved arguing, though only as he loved exercise, which he always held was as necessary for the health of the mind as of the body.

Evelyn's temper, naturally cheerful, had become more so from the choice he had made of a profession. The family living, which he enjoyed, had been a fortune sufficient for his wishes, when its competency was increased by his succeeding also to the family estate. This was about two thousand pounds a-year, and came to him by the death of his elder brother. Before this, he had married a woman of a character congenial to his own, whom he tenderly loved. Her death had been a severe, but not an irretrievable blow to his happiness. Submission first, and travelling afterwards, by which he distracted his melancholy, and cultivated a high natural taste, completed his restoration; and an only daughter, as she grew up, filled (without displacing her, if I may use the expression) the room in his heart which had been occupied by her mother.

He was forty-five years of age, and though he had seen much of the world, and kept the best company both at home and abroad, he cheerfully returned to the functions of a parish priest, only varied by residing in the hall of his ancestors, in which he maintained a useful life, with the plainest simplicity of manners.

It may be supposed that the greeting of such a man was not displeasing to Tremaine; but, exclusive of his wish to see his old friend, he was excited also by a little curiosity. Whenever he had heard of Evelyn, although glad of his welfare, he generally blamed his choice of life. To throw away his talents on the church, he thought, was at best a mistake; and to immure himself in a rectory, or a country hall, instead of leading in the first ranks of society, was at least as bad. And as Tre-

maine had now had experience of the inefficacy of even a brilliant solitude to confer happiness, he was eager, without knowing it, to detect and criticise the error of his friend.

"Poor man!" said he, "he seeks me, and well he may, to relieve his desert life, tied down, as he must be, to mere mechanical occupations, which must deprive him of all the leisure necessary for elegant retirement."

He wrote a kind answer to his letter, and fixed the next day for seeing him.

The meeting was unaffectedly pleasing to both, though without the rapture which characterizes youth. Evelyn's countenance was lighted up with a sincere but tempered satisfaction: Tremaine's unbent more, because it had more to unbend.

His friend, indeed, was struck with a sort of saturnine turn of feature, which had not originally belonged to the face he had formerly known, and which, with great concern, he attributed to his illness.

The rosy health, the good-natured intelligence, the well-regulated happiness, that appeared in Evelyn, could not fail to strike Tremaine, who, had he not known his age, would have thought him several years younger than he was. "This man has not been buried in a desert, nor has he wanted enjoyment," said Tremaine to himself.

After the first salutations, Evelyn, lamenting the cause that brought his friend into the country, lamented still more that he had ever abandoned it; "and to tell you the truth, my good friend," said he, "I do not think your retreat from the world has done much for you."

"I have been ill," said Tremaine, "which none of us can help; otherwise, I should have reaped from it all the advantages I had expected, after a stormy life; though I fear I cannot say that retirement has done as much for me as it seems to have done for you."

"For *me*," replied Evelyn; "I assure you I never retired!"

"I thought you had been a recluse like myself, only of a longer standing," pursued Tremaine; "and my only fear for you was, the sad destruction of your time, occa-

sioned by the irksome and unsatisfying duties which your living obliged you to perform."

"Those duties are my best friends," said Evelyn, "for they are not only very much to my taste, which one's business does not always happen to be, but they give the real value and zest, I believe, to all my less serious employments."

Tremaine expressed, as politely as he could, a kind of incredulous assent to these assertions of Evelyn, who continued—

"When you favour me with a visit at Evelyn Hall, which I hope you will soon be able to do, I trust you will find nothing there that is either irksome or unsatisfactory."

They now fell on other matters. Evelyn inquired, and Tremaine recounted, the particulars of his Northamptonshire retirement, the business that had forced him from it, and the steps necessary to be taken; by which it appeared to Evelyn, that, from sheer indolence alone, Tremaine was about to lose great advantages from an inclosure, that was pending in parliament, to an immense extent. He allowed that he had been to blame; but laid it upon his illness; and Evelyn perceiving that he did not like to be catechised, did not push the inquiry. The meeting ended in offers of service from Evelyn, which, from influence in his neighbourhood, he was very capable of affording; and in a promise of Tremaine, to return the visit as soon as possible, at Evelyn's mansion.

Left to himself, Tremaine could not disguise the advantage which his friend seemed to have over him (although seven or eight years older) in the buoyancy and spring of his mind, and even in activity of body. "He has never known care," he whispered to himself, "and having been able to lower his view of life in a manner I did not expect from him, he has had nothing to do but to vegetate; and, like other vegetables, he flourishes in a wholesome soil. Yet there must be a great falling-off somewhere, which I shall soon discover. With his mind, I could not have expected it."

Upon consideration, however, Tremaine taxed himself

with injustice—recollecting that his friend had not only experienced care, but the greatest grief; while he himself had scarcely ever known a real misfortune.

The rest of the day was given to business, very irksome to the person concerned, who lamented the loss of hours consumed in perusing old parchments, wills, deeds, and arbitrations, and listening to his steward on a variety of interests. Yet, such is the force of habit, that when left a little to himself in the evening, and during part of the two next days, the liberty he had panted for was not relished.

Whatever we may think, liberty and leisure must be wholly without disturbance of mind or body, to be enjoyed as they ought; and the few hours that were thus left to Tremaine were wasted within doors at Woodington, almost as much as they had been at Belmont.

Yet Woodington had been the seat of his youth; the seat where his ancestors had been born, and trained to manhood—a manhood they had not disgraced. There were associations about this, which in other times would have made his heart swell; but he repressed the feeling, if he now had it—observing to himself, that these were mere prejudices, and, as such, unworthy a wise man to indulge. Hence the fine woods and beautiful farms which had struck him on the evening of his arrival, and the old battlements that were "bosomed high" among them, he now surveyed, or did his utmost to survey, with indifference.

He had been at Woodington some four or five days before he returned (for I cannot say he did not think of returning) Evelyn's visit. Yet the mansion of his friend was not above two miles off, and was clearly visible on a hill opposite to his own windows. He felt a little reproached by every look he cast upon it; and though he laid the blame as usual upon the state of his health, yet even that being confessedly better, he at length, attended by a groom, set out for Evelyn Hall. He soon crossed the river that divided the two houses, and was there so quickly as to feel additional reproach for not having been there before.

CHAPTER XVI.

AN OLD HALL.

You have here a goodly dwelling and a rich.

SHAKSPEARE.

Lord! who would live turmoiled in a court,
And may enjoy such pleasant walks as these!
This small inheritance my father left me,
Contenteth me, and 's worth a monarchy.

SHAKSPEARE.

Evelyn Hall was not one of those houses seated in the recesses of a park, where a solitude is to be traversed before you approach its inhabitants. It rose (many people of *taste* said, too suddenly) in the very village from which itself and its possessors had derived their names ever since the Conquest. Cottages lay scattered in all directions, with every one its little forecourt or garden, filled with sweet herbs, and interspersed with hollyocks, poppies, and all the common cottage flowers.

Tremaine himself might have been alive to the air of gay comfort it gave to these humble dwellings; nor was the gaiety diminished by groups of healthy children that played at the doors, under the care (the only one that seemed left them) of several old men, who were consoling their age in the sun.

Tremaine tried to be pleased, and sighed to think the time was gone by when such sights and sounds used to give him pleasure.

The house was very little changed from what it had been when Tremaine had known it, except that a high dead wall, which had buried the front in gloom, had been thrown down, for a lighter fence, which let in the eye to the whole length of the building. This was only separated from the road by a large broad green court, blazing with flowering shrubs on each side, themselves overtopped by some very lofty timber.

At right angles to the line of the dwelling, quite in defiance of all rules of taste, approached the road, skirted on each side by a double row of elms, which formed a favourite walk of the villagers; while a bench or two, placed there on purpose by the good-natured Evelyn, afforded the alternative of repose. And often was it enjoyed, not only by the inhabitants, but by many a wayfaring pilgrim or traveller; and often has a pedlar with his pack, or an old soldier, or soldier's family passing to their homes, been seen resting from their pilgrimage in that pleasant shade.

This was reproached to Evelyn by people of taste, as an eyesore, and as letting improper persons intrude upon his privacy. Perhaps it did so; but to this he would reply, by asking how many minutes in the day his sovereignty was invaded? to which he would add, "many or few, God help them, they are welcome."

The house itself was of old brick, bordered with stone. It affected no sort of architecture—consisting, in fact, of nothing but three similar divisions, each rising into a pediment crowned by a ball of stone, with a projecting broad window or bartizan in each, making deep recesses in the rooms which they lighted. On the right was a bowling-green, famous in the village annals; on the left a grove of oaks, peopled by rooks, coeval with the family, but which every person of judgment who visited Evelyn condemned as by far too near to the house. The walks were out of all rule; for though there were no figures in yew, nor nine thousand flower-pots in rows, of Reine Marguerites*, yet there was a regular return of the same flowers (as many said, far too common ones,) such as walls, Provence roses, convolvolus, and sweet-william, which sadly offended the eyes, if not the noses, of botanists of taste.

Somehow or another, Evelyn could never bring him-

* In the garden of M. de Biron at Paris, consisting of fourteen acres, every walk is buttoned on each side by lines of flower-pots, which succeed in their seasons. When I saw it there were nine thousand Asters, or Reine Marguerites.—*Lord Orford on Modern Gardening.*

self to cure these faults; nay, it has been asserted, we know not how truly, that he was actually once detected conspiring with his gardener to restore the shape of an old peacock, in which a very large yew tree had once been said to flourish; and the story ran that he was only defeated in his purpose by want of skill in the other conspirator.

But lest the sombre taste of Queen Elizabeth should convict the family of dulness, a gayer ancestor, in the time of King Charles, had rebuilt the back-front, after a design of the more modern Inigo Jones. In this, some white pilasters of Grecian composition relieved and lighted the pile, whose original red had long been softened into grey.

Such was the family-house of Evelyn; who, with the exception of the time he had passed abroad and occasional visits and tours, to which he was not averse, had resided there from the time he came into its possession; a period of full twenty years.

It was nearly that time since Tremaine had beheld it, and, in the temper he was in, it did not please. He was full of Vitruvius, Italy, and Belmont; the proximity of the village offended, the church was much too near, and the noise of a blacksmith's hammer, returning at regular intervals, was not so far off but that every stroke clinked upon his ear.

Yet how differently may we be affected! I have often sauntered at Evelyn's gate, when there was no other sound that broke in upon the stillness but the rhythm of this very hammer, and I have thought it music.

At length Tremaine betook himself to the bell at the gate, which, not being answered immediately, he had leisure still more to criticise the situation of his friend's mansion. This he pronounced within himself to be dull, and wondered that a man of his known taste could have been content to dwell so long in the very midst of clowns. "There was an air of rust about him," said Tremaine to himself, "when he called upon me; and how should it be otherwise?" Then recollecting the appearance of happy cheerfulness which Evelyn had exhibited a few

days before, he set it down to the mere effect of a sudden meeting with a man he respected, after so long an absence.

A servant in a plain brown livery now presented himself, and apologized with old-fashioned civility for having kept him so long waiting. The other man, he said, was out on a message, and he had been assisting his master in making a new walk.

"He must be very much reduced for amusement," thought Tremaine; then, ordering the man to announce him, he entered the house.

The inside of it corresponded with the exterior. Old wainscots, old floors, and an old staircase; large fireplaces, little regularity, and much convenience. The hall was like all old halls,—perhaps too large for the rest of the house; yet it threw an air of spaciousness, if not of grandeur, about it, which it would not have been so well without. Its only ornament was the back and breastplate, in which a Sir John Evelyn had sallied forth to join Prince Rupert, previous to the battle of Marston Moor! The furniture, however, of the other apartments, which was comparatively modern, shewed that comfort, though without splendour, had been thoroughly studied. Some very good paintings by the old masters, added to family pictures, coloured glass, and other ornamental, though old-fashioned appendages, gave a glow and cheerfulness to every part of the mansion which dissipated all notion of gloom.

A door from the hall into a garden-room shewed books, towards which Tremaine mechanically directed his steps. A grand piano-forte, a harp, and a violoncello, with many music-books; some fine drawings in gilt frames (one of them a perfect delineation of Woodington), and a pretty large collection of belles-lettres, religion, and moral philosophy, to say nothing of Richardson's and all the best modern novels, demonstrated that this was at least not the most neglected room in the house. A silk work-bag and lace veil shewed also that the inhabitants were not confined to the rougher sex.

CHAPTER XVII.

A PARSON, AND A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

> Pardon me, I pray you;
> I thought that all things had been savage here.
> . . . . . .
> The fairest hand I ever touch'd; oh beauty!
> 'Till now, I never knew thee.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

All further examination was precluded by the approach of Dr. Evelyn himself, and a lady whom he presented to Tremaine as his daughter Georgina.

Jaundiced as he was, the lovely, the dazzling freshness of this young person, and the beams of a countenance in which modesty and ingenuousness seemed to rival one another, could not fail to strike Tremaine with more than common pleasure. There was a natural grace in her manner, so evidently superior to that which is, or can be taught, that, prepared to criticise, nay, even to find fault, he was in spite of himself enchanted.

When introduced, she gave him her hand by her father's command, and, though perfectly self-possessed, for a moment it called into her cheek a blush which the most skilful painter would in vain have attempted to delineate. The hand, too, which she gave, as he did not fail to observe, was of exquisite mould, and he was a great admirer of a beautiful hand. Small, taper, white, and of velvet softness, it combined with an airy foot, and a general fineness of limb, to produce that lovely symmetry always so powerful in its effects, and so infinitely more fascinating to a mind of taste than the most perfect beauty without it.

In truth there was something in this young creature's

whole appearance not easily to be described. There was a pensiveness in her arched and pencilled brow which instantly filled the heart of the beholder with interest of the most serious kind; but then, again, all seriousness was lost in the fascinations of a smile which lighted every thing into joy. Her cheek was dimpled, and gave a play to her countenance such as none else, in Tremaine's opinion, had ever exhibited. It was the lightning play so beautifully described by Petrarch, in the "*lampeggio del angelico riso*" of Laura.

Tremaine was, in fact, peculiarly struck; so much so, that with all his *usage du monde*, he seemed lost; till at length he stammered out a sort of compliment to Evelyn upon his having such a companion in his solitude, which must, he said, for ever have prevented time from hanging heavy.

"Why aye," said Evelyn, "a daughter is a good thing enough to help an old bachelor to keep house, scold the maids, and carve at table. It is a pity that I have not the gout, that she might complete her perfections by setting cushions and folding flannel. In other respects, too," he added, smiling, "the lady is well enough; at least, she tells me so herself."

At these words, such *riant* looks were interchanged by the father and daughter, that Tremaine almost experienced a feeling of envy, though he knew not to what it pointed.

"I imagine," said he, at last, looking round upon a Guarini which lay open on the table, "that Miss Evelyn is made for other things than to scold maids, and settle cushions."

"That is a town compliment," said Evelyn; "and I must request," added he, smiling, "that you will not begin your visit to Evelyn, by turning the head of its parson's daughter."

"If you knew how I hate the town," replied Tremaine, "you would not accuse me of affecting any thing belonging to it."

"Surely that involves too general a censure," said

Evelyn; "and if you are serious (which I hope you are not), I must express my concern at a disgust which I should apprehend, in one like you, must certainly be unsound, or at least premature."

"So far from it," returned Tremaine, "that few things could, I believe, make me relish the world again; and if you had your leisure all to yourself, I know not the man whose life I could envy so much as yours."

"Thank God and my girl," said Evelyn, looking at her with affection, "it has not been unhappy; but I assure you, if I were to complain of any thing in my life, it should not be that I had not my leisure all to myself: that is a demon whose slave I have no inclination to be."

"You astonish me," said Tremaine: "not wish for leisure! the prime, the only sweetener of life! the only desideratum of a wise man!"

"I am afraid I am not wise enough to be of that opinion," replied Evelyn! "for, to let you into a secret, I have long thought I should not know what to do with it."

"With your attainments?" asked Tremaine.

"Yes! and more too, if I had them," said Evelyn; "and if I did not preach, marry, and christen, besides poking myself into all the quarrels of the neighbourhood; to say nothing of raising cabbages, and growing barley: and if Georgy there did not, as I said, scold the maids and make butter,—we should *conjuguer le verbe*, and be as badly off as the poor prince, who with all his high rank was miserable, from having nothing else to do."

Tremaine looked his wonder, and expressed it, too, that persons apparently so formed for all the refinements which leisure alone could produce, should so mistake and calumniate its blessings; but as for the prince, and conjugating the *verb*, he owned himself ignorant of the allusion.

"Shew him the passage, my dear," said Dr. Evelyn; upon which his daughter took down a volume of Thiebaut's Souvenirs, and with some timidity, but the farthest in the world from *mauvaise honte*, and shewing

only how much her first object was to please her father, read as follows:

"Que faites-vous à Potzdam?" demandai-je un jour au prince Guillaume.

"Monsieur," me répondit-il, "nous passons notre vie à conjuguer tous le même verbe; oui, monsieur, nous faisons tous une conjugaison, et toujours la même; Je m'ennuie, tu t'ennuies, il s'ennuie, etc. enfin, monsieur, la conjugaison toute entière; voilà notre unique occupation."

Though Tremaine felt the pleasantry of the quotation, he denied that it could apply. "You would not have me believe," said he, "that what was above a mere unlettered prince, is too much for the well-stored minds of those with whom I am conversing."—

"Thanking you for the compliment," said Evelyn, "I know not that the prince was unlettered."

"He was a prince," answered Tremaine, with something like spleen.

"But surely not unlearned," said Evelyn. "If the command of the best instructors that learning can supply, can ensure the communication of knowledge, princes ought to be, and therefore may be, knowing."

"You forget," observed Tremaine, "that if the instructors are even well selected, they will not always enforce instructions; but they never *can* be well selected."

"And why not?" asked Evelyn.

"Because it is a world where intrigue and bad ministers carry every thing. It is not every prince that can have the good fortune of being instructed by a La Harpe."

"You are too quick for me," said Evelyn; "otherwise, I should contest your bad ministers; but you, I believe, are a Whig, and it is long since Whigs have been in office!"

Tremaine smiled at the intended inference, but with some bitterness; and Evelyn proceeded: "I, who am neither Whig nor Tory, am at least content with our own men; and as for La Harpe, supposing the merit

you seem to give him, I would rather have named a Markham,* or a Jackson,† to prove not only that good instruction for princes was not confined to Russia, but that our own princes had enjoyed that advantage in even a still greater degree. You will, however, my good friend, I think, allow that there is spirit enough in the Prince of Brunswick's description, to shew that he knew his disease well."

"Then why did he not cure himself?" asked Tremaine.

"I suppose because at his years he was too much upon the pursuit of pleasure to think of making business."

"Of making business!"

"Why, yes! for with all our pride, our attainments, and our philosophy, I observe the animal too much preponderates. We kick against duty, and if force is not

* Dr. Markham, the late Archbishop of York, so venerable, so learned, so liberal, and so kind!—It is difficult to name the memory that is so much and so fondly cherished by the friends, young and old, who survive him.

† Dr. Cyril Jackson, the late Dean of Christ Church, a man not more formed for the college, than for the court, the state, and the world. The latter he shuns, only (as it is said, and as we hope) that he may yet be still more its benefactor. A man who was supposed to be most ambitious, but proved himself to be so, only by soaring above ambition. His uncommon powers in directing his college are acknowledged by the first characters in the state, who may owe it in some measure to him, that they are what they are. His refusal of all dignities, and his retreat from the world, in a green old age, have puzzled many: it is for himself to unravel it; but as it is said the discovery will be posthumous, it is to be hoped it will not be soon. Of these two men, he who writes may say, as Johnson once said of one of his early benefactors, "I honoured them, and they endured me." Such were the persons of whose abilities and virtues as preceptor and sub-preceptor, the two eldest of our princes had the advantage: which to their honour they acknowledge with amiable gratitude to this day.

[With the above note of the author, the editor did not dare to meddle; although aware how different it would have been made, had it been written after, instead of before the death of the person to whom it relates.]

put upon us by others, it must be by ourselves. We in fact are too prone to be idle; and idleness, as my daughter's morality-master here says, is 'the root of all evil.'"

"Pray, may I ask," said Tremaine, "who is the happy person you speak of as Miss Evelyn's morality-master?"

"The writing-master of the village," returned Evelyn. Georgina smiled, and her father, with some humour, taking up a set of writing copies, designed for the village school, presented the words to Tremaine in handsome copperplate.

"Is not this rather childish?" said the latter, almost piqued.

"Perhaps so," answered Evelyn; "but are we not all children?"

"Not exactly, I hope."

"Well! I will not be so uncivil as to say so of a grave legislator; but, reverend doctor as I am, I confess myself to be one, in most things but innocence."

"You surely do not hold that any force upon us is necessary to prevent our being idle!"

"I never was more serious in my life," answered the Doctor; "for though growing an old fellow, I remember at school, I never was so tired as on a whole holiday, unless I undertook some long excursion, and that was the same thing as making business. Left to myself to lie under the trees, and read about it in Virgil and Horace the whole day long, I found what was so charming in description, was in practice the most insupportable thing in the world."

Tremaine here observed, with some peevishness, that it was not merely to read, or even to understand the poets, that would give the delicacy of imagination necessary to feel them; that some men were made for business, others for contemplation, and that every one, of course, understood himself best."

"Not quite of course, I'm afraid," said Evelyn; "at least I remember making what I hoped were very pretty verses, and which even gained me a prize at Oxford, upon the simplicity of the pastoral life, and the pleasures

of viewing the world at a distance: which I never should have done had I not been sincere in every feeling I described."

"Your inference," said Tremaine.

"Why, that I thought I understood myself; though I found afterwards I did no such thing."

"You have then been unhappy in your retirement?" cried Tremaine, with more placidity.

"Unhappy!" exclaimed Georgina, looking round her.

"Unhappy!" echoed her father, "no, indeed: but perhaps I *should* have been so, if I had not found employment; in other words, *made* business for myself."

"May I ask how and what?" said Tremaine, rather impatient of the subject.

"Certainly, though you will blush for me when I tell you that with the exception of my Bible, my sermons and my garden, I am chiefly occupied with warrants, and acts of parliament."

"Barbarous!" said Tremaine.

"But very useful," replied Evelyn.

Tremaine now looking about him with seeming impatience, the Doctor changed the conversation.

"It is a little strange, my dear sir," said he, "that, in the first moments of your visit, we should fall into an argument on the duties of life, and that I should neglect one of the first of them—hospitality: will you not take refreshment? you seem more tired than you ought to be."

Refreshments were now ordered, and conversation commenced, in which the charms of music, prompted by the instruments, and the beauties of Guarini, prompted by the book on the table, were discussed.

The volume was open at that passage on the spring, which has been so often admired, and which Tremaine read:

O! Primavera, gioventu dell' anno,
Bella madre di fiori,
D' erbe novelle, e di novelli amori,
Tu torni ben, ma teco
Non tornano i sereni
E fortunati di delle mie gioje.

"By his reading it with so much feeling," said Evelyn to Georgina, "I hope Mr. Tremaine likes that passage as well as we do."

"It was always a favourite with me," replied he, "nor do I know which to like best, the sentiments, or the delicacy of the diction."

"I love all descriptions of the spring," said Georgina.

"I hope you will long continue to do so," observed her companion; "but your love will certainly wear off."

"I do not think that possible," answered Georgina.

Tremaine shook his head; a smile, and then something like a sigh, escaped him. Evelyn fixed his eyes upon him, as if endeavouring to make him out. "I am sorry, my friend," said he, "to hear you say this."

"How can it be otherwise," returned his guest, "than that an experienced man should feel differently from youth?"

"In knowledge of the world, I grant ye," said Evelyn, "and when we are really old and blunted in the feelings of nature. But that is not the case yet with *me*, much less with you. I no longer, indeed, think of some goddess of a mistress, when I stand under a tree and listen to the nightingale; but the notes themselves, and the stillness and freshness of evening, can lull me as much ever."

"It is mere imagination," said Tremaine.

"And pray what is it in a youth?" asked Evelyn.

"Reality," answered his guest.

"And who is to judge?"

"The heart."

"Agreed, for it is the heart tells me I can still feel."

"I thought," said Tremaine, drily, "you had been absorbed in the Bible and acts of parliament!"

"As for the one," replied the Rector, "I know not the heart that would not be mended by it; but neither in the one nor the other am I *absorbed*. I just take enough of both to fit myself the better to enjoy what we are talking of, whether in such passages as this of Guarini, or the realities which he only describes; these flowers, this sun, and all the glories of the spring; and

pardon me if I suspect, my good friend, that it is the having quaffed too largely of what ought only to be sipped, that has made you lose your relish for it."

Tremaine assured him he was wrong, and that it was only the disappointments which attended all the promises of the spring, that had induced him to make the observation; and "I would appeal," added he, "even to the fresher feelings of Miss Evelyn herself, for the correctness of this opinion."

Georgina, thus called upon, answered with some hesitation,—

"It is true, there are disappointments in *some* of the promises of spring, but I hope not in *all:* and as I take care not to raise my expectations too high, what the spring does not perform cannot make me love her the less for what she does. Besides, it is the very variety of the seasons that makes them please most. Were primroses never to fade, I should grow tired of them; and if there were no fears or labour in a garden, it would lose much of its pleasure when fears have passed away, and labour has succeeded.

Tremaine's looks became clouded. He found that a volume had been spoken in these few words, and that, however simple, nay, trite the sentiment, it had gone the whole length of his own case, in accounting for the little pleasure he had found in his garden, after his high expectations from it. He seized his hat, looked at his watch, and was preparing to take his leave, when Evelyn asked him how the business of the enclosure went on. He made a wry face, and observed, that there were so many jarring interests to reconcile, so much selfishness to contend with, that he despaired of surmounting the difficulties of his case.

"That illness has been unfortunate," said Evelyn, with a scrutinizing eye, "in more ways than one."

"Extremely so," returned Tremaine; "for in this instance, if it had not prevented me from attending to letters of business, I should not now have to get over the legal forms, upon which illiberal people hold me at arm's length. One man in particular, though only

a yeoman, refuses all accommodation, for no reason, I believe, but that he may say he does not care for the 'Squire."

"A good, sturdy, English reason," observed Evelyn; "and yet, if you mean farmer Ryecroft, of Velvet Mead, he is, though rough, not without good-nature."

"You know him?" said Tremaine.

"He is one of the best of my parishioners," returned the Doctor, "comes punctually to church, and pays every man his own."

"He did not pay me," rejoined Tremaine; "for being merely thrown out on a point of form, I looked upon what I wanted as my own."

"He, perhaps, thought otherwise," said Evelyn, "and, though he might be wrong, chose to exert his birth-right of thinking for himself. At any rate, you possibly claimed a due, instead of asking a favour."

"I know not how that was," said Tremaine; "I left it all to my lawyer."

"My good friend," answered Evelyn, kindly, "*why* did you leave it all to your lawyer? Forgive me when I ask, what could have prevented your doing it yourself?—Velvet Mead is, I know, within one of your nearest manors, and a pleasant ride to boot. Your health, as well as your purse, might have been served by it."

Tremaine very frankly confessed that he had more than once thought of it; but being engaged in his library, he had put it off, and at length deputed his agent.

"Why, if indeed the business that engaged you was so pressing,"—said Evelyn, inquiringly.

"A pamphlet on the Catholic question," answered Tremaine.

"Very good; but which you had probably studied in town, when that question came on."

"I own," returned his friend, "it was because I had not studied it then, that I thought I would do so now."

"Now that you have seceded from parliament?" said Evelyn.—

The observation did not please.

"Have you courage enough," continued the Doctor, not seeming to mind his little embarrassment, "to go forthwith to Velvet Mead, and let me accompany you? And, if you will but unbend a little, I think we shall succeed."

"I will do what you please," said Tremaine, "but not now; to-morrow or next day will do; at present, I really have not time."

"Forgive me, my dear sir, and set it not down to impertinence, if I ask what demands you have upon this same time, to prevent a thing so pressing?"

Tremaine, recollecting himself, found that if he that instant returned home, he should not know what to do with himself. He felt confused, and shewed his confusion; till at length he said, "you have a strange way with you; at my years still to assert your old ascendancy over me, is not what I expected. I am not used to be tutored, and have a great mind to resist, like farmer Ryecroft himself, if only to shew I *can* resist. However, I will do as you please."

A frank and gracious manner in saying this, so as peculiarly to strike Georgina, who had sat a silent listener till now, induced her to lighten up at this concession to her father's activity.

"It will do you both a great deal of good to ride," said she.

"And you, Miss Evelyn?"

"Oh! Papa seldom rides without me: but, perhaps, upon business like this I may be *de trop*."

"If you are," said her father, "we'll send you to take a lesson from old Mrs. Ryecroft, on the best mode of rearing spring turkeys. You know how you failed there."

"Miss Evelyn rear turkeys!" exclaimed Tremaine.

"No! she does *not* rear them," answered the Doctor, "to the very great disappointment of my palate; and I do not like her to be inferior to Mrs. Ryecroft."

Tremaine could not help expressing something like surprise at this: which the Doctor perceiving, added,—

"She is a country girl, and therefore ought to know country business. But if I were ever so rich, I know not a thing more amusing, I had almost said interesting, than a *basse cour*."

Tremaine hinted his opinion, that it was beneath the notice of the wise, the well-educated, and the elegant.

"I would rather say," replied Evelyn, "the fashionable, the fastidious, and the vacant. But even the Cardinal de Retz was amused with pigeons, when separated from the world; and I need not tell you all the fine things that Addison was able to say on a hen and chickens."

"I would read them in Addison," said Tremaine, "but not plague myself with what, after all, a higler's wife would understand better.

"I don't know that," said the Doctor, "if we were not idle; but the study of nature, in whatever shape, must always please, if only as a study; and in this instance the utility is so palpable, that it adds to the interest."

"You would turn Miss Evelyn, then, into a poulterer," said Tremaine, laughing.

"No more than I would turn myself into a wine-cooper, because I keep the keys of my cellar."

"But what does Miss Evelyn say to it herself?"

"Why, that if I were to lose my poultry-yard, I should lose one of my greatest pleasures."

"And yet the girl makes a very good courtesy, reads Guarini, and plays the harp," said Evelyn.

The horses coming to the door, saved Tremaine a reply. They mounted, and proceeded through a very pretty country to Velvet Mead House.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AN ENGLISH YEOMAN.

Where is your yeoman? Is it a lusty
Yeoman? Will'a stand to't?——

SHAKSPEARE.

It was a large stone mansion, which had been an old manorial residence, and consequently was more spacious than necessary for a man who lived by farming his estate with his own hands. This inconvenience, bearable in itself, was rendered more so from its owner having applied one or two of the rooms to the purposes of a granary. In the hall stood a sack of flour; what had been the great eating-room was converted into an excellent kitchen, in which bright pewter and burnished brass were resplendent; and a smaller room was consecrated to the care of the farmer's saddle, silver-bitted bridle, and Mrs. Ryecroft's well-stuffed pad, flounced with green serge. A parlour on one side the hall, constituted the only dwelling-room, where eating, conversation, and work were alternately carried on. A door led from it to a green walk, flanking the kitchen-garden, at the end of which was an arbour of honey-suckle.

It was after dinner when the visiters arrived, and in this arbour, at his afternoon's pipe, the farmer was seated. At the sight of his Rector he rose up, as well as sixteen stone would permit, and pulled off his hat with a civility which was evidently sincere: hoped he and Miss were as well as they looked; and staring rather at Tremaine, and afterwards at Evelyn, seemed to inquire who he was.

"I have brought my friend and neighbour, Mr. Tremaine, to see you," said Dr. Evelyn.

The farmer instantly put on his hat, and sat down again, saying coldly, as he returned to his pipe, "I am glad to see you, Sir." At this he gave a whiff or two,

with rather more energy than usual; but perceiving it annoyed the young lady, he immediately knocked out the ashes, observing that he should be sorry to incommode Miss.

"She is an old friend," said her father.

"Aye!" returned he, "I have known her sin' that high, and my mistress be as fond of her as I."

During all this, he took not the least notice of Tremaine, who was evidently annoyed. Thinking, however, it was incumbent upon him to be civil, he observed upon the pleasant situation and goodness of his house.

"Why this house, you see," said Ryecroft, "was bought by my father of your grandfather, before you was born: and many's the time both he and I have been up at the Hall, and were always welcome; but I don't know how it is you don't live among us, 'Squire."

Tremaine protested it was not from want of inclination, but that he had been so occupied by attending Parliament, that he never yet had had time.

"And what hand did you make of it in Parliament?" asked Ryecroft.

This was a short question, which evidently gave no pleasure.

"I mean," he continued, before there was time for reply, "which side did you take?"

"Oh! as to that," answered Tremaine, with a little contempt, "I suppose I am right, for I was for the country."

"So we are all, I hope," said Ryecroft.

"I mean," explained the Squire, "that I was of *your* side; for I was always against the government."

"Then you was not o' my side; and, with submission, you could not have been always right," answered Ryecroft.

Tremaine bit his lip, and for a time it was a hit; for it was in vain that he thought of explaining the nature of a *systematic* opposition, which made every question the same; such a boor, he supposed, could not understand it.

Thinking from his silence that he had hit harder than he had, Ryecroft went on: "To tell you the truth, Squire Tremaine, I am not one of them that thinks Government

always in the wrong; though I pay a mort of taxes, too: but I'm for George against all his enemies, whether at home or abroad; whether they be French or English."

"This is too silly," said Tremaine, in a low voice to Evelyn; and then in a louder tone continued, "Why, my good man, do you suppose I'm an enemy to the king, because I oppose bad ministers?"

"How do I know they are bad?" returned Ryecroft, roughly: "others might be worse!"

"My fate is decided, I see," said Tremaine again to Evelyn; and looking after the horses, added, "we shall be late home, and gain nothing here."

"Hear the farmer out," replied the Doctor; "I assure you he speaks the sense of most of this parish."

"And of the next too," added Ryecroft, rubbing his hands; for he liked a dish of politics as well as any of his betters, and read two evening papers regularly in the week. He then begged them not to be in a hurry, and asked if they would stay where they were, or adjourn to the parlour.

"Oh, here, by all means," said Tremaine.

"But I must fetch you some ale," he continued, "and though it may be a bold word, I'll venture to say it's as good as Woodington can shew, for its life."

Tremaine assured him he never drank ale.

"So much the worse for you, perhaps," rejoined the farmer; "for, excuse my freedom" (looking at him), "you don't look well, not half so ruddy as your father."

Tremaine bowed, and wished himself at home, at Belmont, at the devil, or any where but where he was; but Evelyn sitting down, and Georgina saying she would go and find Mrs. Ryecroft, he had nothing left but to sit down too.

The farmer being forbidden by his rector to fetch any ale, would not however lose his politics.

"Squire Tremaine—" he continued—"but I hope" (looking at Evelyn) "I'm not making too bold."

"I'll answer for it," said Evelyn.

Tremaine again bowed.

"Well then," he went on, "with your leave, Squire Tremaine, I would wish to know what you thought of them Nottingham people?"

"Why, that they were poor, misled, and starving," replied Tremaine; "much oppressed, and therefore to be pitied."

"I grant you, to be pitied," rejoined the farmer, "because we pity them that deserve to be hanged; but did you think them justifiable? how did you vote?"

"I am glad that I am not with one of my constituents," said Tremaine; "in truth, my good friend, I did not vote at all; though I do not know the particular question upon which you are catechising me."

"I mean," replied the farmer, "the question to make it a hanging matter to force them oaths as they did down our throats. I shall never forget their catching me as I was coming from Nottingham, and with pistols and horse-whips obliged me (God forgive me!) to swear I would never reveal any thing about them, even though they committed murder: and we know that they did commit a many murders in those parts. Now the ministry did very right, in my mind, to make this hanging, without stopping for much of a debate; and yet some of the patriots, as you gentlemen calls yourselves and one another, said it was wrong to be in a hurry, and that there ought to have been more arguing about it. Arguing, indeed! when our throats might be all cut in the meantime. The upshot is, excuse my boldness, that if you voted against this, or did not vote at all, which is as bad, why you and I don't agree, Squire, that's all; I hope no offence."

Tremaine assured him he was not offended—that every one had a right to his opinion.

"Why that's right," said Ryecroft; "only I was a saying, that this was the sort of thing that made me never trust a man the more, for saying he was for the country, only because he was against the government; as you did just now."

Evelyn smiled. In fact the farmer had got upon his favourite topic—his adventure with the oath-makers,—which he always said had nearly cost him his life; and as

he had a horror of assassination, he was not easily silenced. Strange, however, as it may seem, the reproaches he had cast upon Tremaine put him into better humour with that gentleman; for, rough as he was, he respected all his superiors, provided they did not attempt to carry things by force; observing there must always be proper subordination—a governor and a governed—a master and a servant—and, what was not the least favourite part of the classification, a husband and wife. All had rights too, he said, although in the two latter classes he was not very liberal in allowing them.

Be that as it may, at bottom he respected Tremaine as a gentleman, and his superior, as his fathers before him (who had all been Tories, from the days of King William) had been in the habit of feeling towards Tremaine's family; and he began to think that he had used his English liberty of speech with sufficient freedom.

As Tremaine's contempt, too, did not shew itself, he took his silence for proof of his own victory, and insensibly, in the true English style, grew better friends with him, as one he had vanquished. With these feelings he exclaimed: "Squire Tremaine, I hope you will excuse my being so downright; but you know us English think we have a right to speak upon politics: and you yourself say I have a right to my own opinion, which is very true, and shews that your having been so long over the sea has not spoiled you. Now, I confess the truth, I thought it had; and when you sent to me by a whipper-snapper of a lawyer, who I can't abide, to get my consent to the inclosure, which you did not choose to ask for yourself, why d'ye see, I refused him plump."

"I know you did," said Tremaine, surprised at what might be coming.

"Why then you see, too, I'll make up for it now, although you and I can never set our horses together about the nation, I see that."

"What am I to understand by this?" asked Tremaine.

"Why, that our worthy rector there, 'Squire Evelyn, asked me two days ago to give consent, and I said I would

think of it; for I really am sorry ever to refuse what he thinks right; he preaches too good sermons for that."

"Thank you, thank you," said the Doctor, "for I perceive that you have now thought better of it, and will gratify Mr. Tremaine as a good neighbour ought to do."

"That is the short and the long of it," replied Ryecroft; "so now you must taste my ale, and I'll get it in a trice."

At this he, with tolerable alertness, moved into the house, and returned with a foaming pitcher; of which the two friends, not able to resist him, having taken each a glass, they took leave of him by shaking hands—a ceremony which he offered, and which Tremaine could not refuse.

"You see he is not so bad as you thought," said the Doctor, after they had ridden a little way.

"I find I am more obliged to you than to him," replied his companion, coldly. "That you should have influence over him, I can conceive: but I must own the price you pay for it does not make me envy you."

Evelyn, perceiving what he meant, assured him that, coarse as he seemed, there was an honesty, and even a kindness about Ryecroft, that might do honour to a much higher polish; that the poor had not a better friend, and that in the several relations of neighbour, father, and husband (where not opposed), no one had more worth. "Why then should I not cultivate (if a few minutes in the week can be called cultivating) the good-will of such a man, merely because he is unpolished? Even in an interested point of view you see it benefits. The proofs of his being a good neighbour have been not a few; and if you knew the power of a bad one over one's comfort (for which I need only send you into the next village, where the parson, the squire, and farmer, seem to live only to plague one another), you would find that, as we cannot get rid of humanity, the best way is, by bearing with it, to make it sit as lightly as possible."

CHAPTER XIX.

AN EVENING AT HOME.—ARGUMENTS.—EARLY RISING.

> Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
> Sit like his grandsire, cut in alabaster?
>
> SHAKSPEARE.
>
> Who's there?——
> My Lord, 'tis I; the early village cock
> Hath thrice done salutation to the morn.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

TREMAINE passed a melancholy evening, which he, as usual, would not allow to be melancholy. He had refused his friend's pressing invitation to dine at Evelyn Hall, without being able to assign any reason for it even to himself, except that he was an invalid, and loved his home. When there, however, he sought in vain for the objects of that "love," of which he talked. His ride, and the collision of mind into which he had entered, gave him, for a moment, an elasticity to which he had long been a stranger; but it was only for a moment. His dinner-hour was still eight, and he really felt exhausted; and yet he still continued in the mistake, fatal to his health, of not relaxing the rule of a fashionable town life.

It was five when he got home, and there were three heavy hours to be waded through. He had no employment, and, what was worse, could make none. He took up a pamphlet, indeed; but finding that he was thinking of the conversations and scenes of the morning, in which he did not like to own to himself how much his friend had the advantage of him, he gaped, and laid it down. He then wandered into the gardens, and beheld the sun approaching the west in all his splendour. There he found a delightful concert of birds, and shrubs and flowers were all pushing into notice, in the most pleasing array of opening buds. But he beheld them as a mere picture, as if their colours had been the work of man.

Here, however, for want of being able to settle himself to any other employment, he loitered away the intermediate hours till dinner; after which,

Stretched on the rack of a too-easy chair,

he indulged, until bed-time, in sundry wise reflections (for such he *thought* them, though he *felt* them to be neither pleasant nor profitable) on the manner in which he had hitherto passed his time in Yorkshire. At all events, he determined to pass the next day differently; and for this purpose ordered his steward to be in attendance, that he might at once wind up the business which had brought him from Belmont.

The next day, however, before his steward could gain admittance, brought his two friends early to see him, and the sound of their horses' feet surprised him before he had well done breakfast.

Tremaine's morning mirror had shown him the face of a man who had passed a restless night; and if the contrast between his own and the awakened countenance of Evelyn struck him forcibly, much more was he impressed with the rosy animation, the buoyant, yet modest manner, the laughing, yet sensible eyes of Georgina.

"This is very good of you," said he, setting chairs.

"I fear we interrupt you," said Evelyn, "for I saw my old friend Jenkins, with a bag full of papers, and a pile of parchments, waiting for you as we came in."

"And do you think I am not glad to have such a business broken in upon, by such an interruption?" replied he, bowing to Georgina.

"More gallant than prudent, perhaps," rejoined his neighbour. "And if we put off business, even if it can be done another time, business may put *us* off when that other time comes. You know my creed in that respect. In truth, we did some good business yesterday, and we wished to tempt you to a little more to-day, especially as Georgina tells me she is sure riding is good for you."

"She is very kind,' replied Tremaine, "to think of me as an invalid whom she can cure. I wish either of you would teach me the art of a good constitution. Though

we don't agree in many of our maxims, there, at least, you have the advantage of me."

"What time do you rise?" said Evelyn, looking inquiringly at the breakfast-table.

"I suppose not so early as you; but I am no system-monger, and it is not because I am ill, that I am late; I rise when it suits me."

He said this with the air of a man not quite sure of his point, but resolved to think himself right.

"And it suits you to rise at eleven," said Evelyn, drily.

"As I am a Whig in philosophy as well as politics," replied Tremaine, "I am an enemy to all force upon one's actions. I am therefore perhaps what those, whose *duty* it is to be up with the sun, would call a sluggard: but it is not *my* duty. Were there a necessity for it, I could leave my bed as soon as any one. When I have sometimes hunted, I was on horseback with the first: and when with the armies, as early as the men I commanded!"

"And why not now?" asked Evelyn.

"Precisely because there is *no* necessity for it; and my rule, if I have one, is to have no rule at all. If I had any method except *not* to be methodical, I should die of ennui." Georgina smiled.

"I see, by that smile," pursued he, "that I am by both of you convicted of being as good as dead already. To resuscitate, you will tell me to rise with the lark,

> Who singing, startles the dull night."

"It would be good for you if you did," observed Evelyn.

"Oh! no doubt! and you will give me, too, a sort of Claude picture of the rising sun; or talk with Milton of the morn,

> Her rosy steps i'the eastern clime advancing,
> Strewing the earth with orient pearl."

"We should do well in doing so," observed Evelyn; "but forgive me if I am seriously alarmed for your way

of life. To say nothing of mind, there are no hours so precious to health as those of the morning; and if you were less of a Whig in your philosophy, and would submit to a little force to make you rise early, you would not be thus pale and ill at ease."

CHAPTER XX.

MORE ARGUMENT—METHOD—AND NECESSARY OCCUPATIONS.

So many hours must I tend my flock;
So many hours must I take my rest;
So many hours must I contemplate;
So many hours must I sport myself.

SHAKSPEARE.

"AND whence, and what could be the force?" asked Tremaine, in reply to the observation of Evelyn which concluded the last chapter.

"Why that's the difficulty," said Evelyn, "as you have, in addition to your system, the misfortune to be so independent in situation."

"Pray observe that I have no system," interrupted Tremaine.

"And pray observe that I wish you had," repeated his friend; "or if not, at least such a pursuit as you could systematically follow."

"Odious!" cried Tremaine.

"Useful!" retorted the Doctor; "useful to interest, to health, to the spirits, the happiness, the very life-blood of man!"

"You speak *ex cathedrâ*," said Tremaine, "and almost persuade me to become a machine. It is certainly true that you seem in robust health, and I may one day be glad to learn how you contrive to dispose of your time, with so many irksome demands upon it as you *choose* to

encourage, and yet preserve that air of contentment which seems to animate you. It is the destruction of my hours by impertinent fools formerly, and tasteless business now, which takes me from my leisure, and to which the indisposition that wears me is certainly owing."

"If I have what you would give me," answered Evelyn, "it is owing to that very division of time which I recommend, and which you reprobate. The leisure I possess enables me to make what allotments of it I please; and by giving every hour its appropriate duty, I am enabled not only to perform it, but perform it with pleasure."

"You astonish me," replied Tremaine; "is it possible that you can call it pleasure to reduce yourself to a mere machine?"

"Even so," returned Evelyn: "and in doing this I know not that I am acting otherwise than in the very scope and design of my nature."

"Impossible! impossible!" retorted Tremaine; and with an energy that seemed to confer a momentary pleasure upon him, he broke out with

> The poet's eye, in a fine phrenzy rolling,
> Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
> And while imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
> Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name.

"Very beautiful," said Georgina, pleased with his whole look, manner, and feeling.

"But the application," added her father.

"It is easy," replied Tremaine; "for do you conceive that a mind thus rolling in phrenzy, thus brilliant in fancy, thus enthusiastic in feeling, can possibly be tied down to rules and hours, like a piece of brute earth, or, to speak more appropriately, like monotonous clock-work?"

"Luckily for mankind," said Evelyn, "we are not all of us poets."

"But we might be," returned Tremaine, interrupting him, "and should, if it were not for those vile trammels in which most of us are unhappily condemned to live."

"Doubting 'your unhappily.'" replied Evelyn, "I particularly doubt it as derived from what you call trammels,—for I was going on to observe, that it is from those very trammels that all which is called *order* arises; and the happiness of order in society, I suppose I need not point out to a legislator like you."

"It will do very well for tinkers and tailors," said Tremaine," with vivacity, "for tradesmen, and secretaries, and lawyers: *they* must do their work, answer their letters, and attend their causes. But we are talking of men of leisure, and, pray observe, men of imagination."

"It is to these I direct my remark," said Evelyn, "and as a professor of idleness, I would presume to lay it down, *ex cathedrâ* if you please, that an order of time, established for the various occupations of even men of leisure, would make them probably wiser, and certainly happier, than they generally are."

"What says Miss Evelyn?" asked Tremaine.

"Oh! papa thinks for me," answered Georgina, "so you need not ask. But even in paradise, in the passages you alluded to just now, our first parents were forced to divide their time *properly* (for I am afraid it would shock you to say *systematically*), in order to perform the *business* which, even to *them*, was committed by Heaven."

"Such a moralist as you would go far to convert me," said Tremaine, while her father nodded his approbation; but can you seriously and sincerely say (barring the beauty of the description) that the address of Adam to his *helpmate* (for so, indeed, we may here call her) does not exhibit a very constrained and homely life? To be always digging a garden, cleaning walks, or watering plants! Confess this is but a vulgar sort of paradise, after all; utterly subversive of the sprightly graces, the sparkling companionship of modern life, and more worthy a market-gardener and his dame than the prince and princess of the world."

"He said this with an energy so animated, an air so graceful, and a voice so impressive, that Georgina could not help being struck. She laughed, however, and was about to reply, when her father interrupted her by saying,

"We have wandered from the point, good folks; which is, not what is the *best* occupation, but whether *some* occupation is not essential."

"Thought is occupation," observed Tremaine.

"I grant you, and a very delightful one: but were we all mere thinkers, what would become of the world?"

"And yet this leisure, which you so much dread," continued Tremaine, this sweet *otium*, is the best gift for which we pray the gods. At least so sings Horace, in his famous Ode; and he knew men as well as you or I*."

"Yes! but his suppliant was an active merchant and '*Prensus Ægæo*,' before he prayed. For while his ship gave her sails to the breeze, and was likely to fill his coffers, he never thought of *otium*."

"You would destroy the great sweetener of life," said Tremaine.

"Believe me not," pursued Evelyn; "I would only make it still more sweet."

"By what?"

"By being *earned*."

"Earned?"

"Yes! this I take to be the great secret of human conduct. The lounger, who was envied by his friend the barrister, toiling down to the courts, goes to the bottom of this subject in three words. 'You are happy,' said his friend; 'you have no term.'—'Alas! yes!' answered the lounger, 'but I have no vacation.' I remember when my theory first arose upon this subject;—but perhaps I fatigue you."

"Quite the contrary," said Tremaine, with good breeding; "I may not agree, but I love to hear you."

Georgina looked pleased.

"'Twas in an old chateau in Languedoc," said Evelyn, "where I passed a month with a middle-aged man, who thought he was tired of the world."

"And was he not so?" asked Tremaine.

"You shall hear. We moralized every day at dinner over a motto in large golden letters, above the great fire-

* Otium Divos prensus Ægæo.

place, placed there in the time of Louis XIII. 'Thou shalt eat the bread of the sweat of thy brow.'"

"Quaint enough," said Tremaine.

"Sound and true," continued Evelyn; "and had my friend, the owner of the chateau, observed it, he would perhaps now be alive."

"How did he die," asked Tremaine.

"Why he was over-run with indolence, from having a large fortune," answered Evelyn.

Tremaine did not like the answer and Evelyn continued.

"He did not *make* business, and from sheer want of something to do, (being too good for vicious pursuits,) he took to eating, without earning it by fatigue; he languished all day for his dinner, with no pretence for it but having eaten his breakfast; a thousand amiable qualities, and even talents, were lost in this crapulence; and he died at forty of no disease but indigestion."

"At forty!" exclaimed Tremaine; "but pray why did he retire?"

"Somebody got before him in the army," replied Evelyn.

Tremaine reddened more and more.

"He grew disgusted," continued his friend, "and thought that, by disgust, he had *earned* a right to retire. He said he was fond of books, and would educate his daughters. But they grew too troublesome, as daughters generally do (looking at Georgina); so they were sent *au couvent*, and he died."

"And yet I suppose he read and thought," observed Tremaine.

"Not much of either; his reading was too light."

"What would you have had him do?" said Tremaine, with a little spleen.

"Dig in his garden," retorted Evelyn, "and then think, or read as lightly as he pleased."

"Mere useless, and therefore thankless labour," persisted Tremaine, "when a gardener would do it so much better."

"You forgot Diocletian's cabbages," answered Evelyn.

"Every one has his favourite pursuit," observed Tremaine.

"Agreed! but will you, my dear friend, tell me yours?"

"The liberal arts and sciences," said Tremaine.

"Admirable! you can then never be unhappy, never be listless: and I should almost say, with natural good health, never unwell."

Tremaine felt himself pressed, and replied with some quickness, "I hope I am above a hobby-horse."

"Perhaps it would be better if you were not."

"What! reduce me to old Shandy, or his brother Toby?"

"Who so happy?" said Evelyn.

"Even they had no force upon them," retorted Tremaine.

"That was because they were so fond of their hobbies, and rode so well," rejoined Evelyn. "It is only where there is no decided cast of the mind that I would have it make one. Once made and cultivated, whether from duty or taste, and every little change is pleasing, for every amusement is *earned*. The very right to choose one's hobby, in other words the right to leisure, or as you would say, to *retire*, should be *earned*. If Diocletian had not earned his cabbages and his buildings at Salona, he would not have refused Maximian's advice to resume the throne."

"Yet Maximian, at least," answered Tremaine, "wished to resume, and so did Charles the Fifth."

"Neither of them had hobbies," said Evelyn; "and, what is more, neither of them were really tired of empire, though they thought so. Say what we please, my dear Sir, of viewing the world at a distance, we are born in it and for it, and it is only under temporary disgusts, or with some object that is to make us more fit for it, such as study or economy—or, at worst, when we are almost worn out, and really want rest,—that to retire can be pleasing. The mind is so active, that it must have work; and, if no other is offered, will prey upon itself."

Tremaine felt cruelly the force of all these observa-

tions; but recollecting himself, he said, "I'm afraid you did not like Mr. Fox."

"I liked Mr. Pitt's politics better," observed Evelyn; "but to say I did not like a man whose uncommon force of mind, added to the most amiable temper and cultivated taste, made him the admiration and delight of his friends, would imply a want of candour to which I cannot plead guilty. But why do you mention him?"

"He *retired*," said Tremaine.

"I doubt it," interrupted Evelyn.

"And yet he was perfectly happy!"

"From the account of him I believe so," observed Evelyn: "but it was because I also think he did *not* retire, that I believe it."

"You surely forget St. Anne's Hill?"

"Not at all; but St. Anne's Hill was but twenty miles from town, and a debate called him whenever his party pleased. In short, he retired like our favourite Horace Walpole, who was always moralizing on the world, but never out of it, and who *made himself business* at Strawberry Hill*."

"You forget," said Tremaine, "Mr. Fox's novels and geraniums."

"And you," replied Evelyn, "his great pursuit in Greek. Now a great pursuit is business; he therefore earned his novels and geraniums. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*"

"Very methodical," cried Tremaine.

"I am a man of method," you know, replied his friend; "but as to Mr. Fox, you forgot, too, he had a partner in retirement. In truth, however, this retirement

* Note by the Editor:—One would suppose (but the date of the publication disproves it) that Evelyn had already seen those delightful letters to Mr. Montague, in one of which Lord Orford says, "Oh! with what joy could I bid adieu to loving and hating! to crowds, public places, great dinners, visits, and above all to the House of Commons! But pray mind, when I retire, it shall be only to London and Strawberry Hill." These passages were written before the publication of those other malignant scandals in the shape of memoirs that will for ever disgrace Walpole as a man.

was only temporary; a mere fit of disgust, because people would not take his advice. This in a less great man would have been called sulking. No! he did not *retire*, and he died in harness after all."

"You surely mistake," said Tremaine. "His country recalled him, and it was against his will."

"I do not know that," persisted Evelyn; "at least his philosophy was soon and hastily laid aside, and at any rate the expectation, the hope of that recal, might feed him in solitude.—No, no! you must on every account bring some other example than that of Mr. Fox."

"The late Dean of Christ-Church," said Tremaine.

"*Nemo nisi post mortem beatus*," returned Evelyn; "the Dean still lives, and if you think he lives without rule or method, that he does not impose force upon his time, and not only make business, but engage in the very trammels of it, you are very much mistaken. By the bye," added the Doctor, as if suddenly recollecting something, and looking at his watch, "the mention of 'business' reminds me that it is time I should tell you *our* business here so early."

"Why, if it is at all pressing, I think it is time," replied Tremaine; "but pray what is it?"

"Neither more nor less than to get you to ride over to B——, to meet your brother magistrates in their quarter sessions assembled.'

Tremaine seemed electrified, and uttered an exclamation amounting almost to a shriek; such as we may have witnessed in a well-graced actor of Lord Ogleby, when Sterling asks him if he meant to marry his sister Heidelberg.

"My brother magistrates! quarter sessions!" cried he, shrinking as he spoke, "what can possibly make you think of such a thing?"

"I cry your mercy," answered Evelyn, "I thought you had been in the commission?"

"Why, yes!"

"And do you not mean to act? Have you not acted in Northamptonshire?"

"In some few instances I have."

"Why then, my friend, is it so wonderful that I should think an acting magistrate should do an act of magistracy? Do not, I beseech you, be affronted if I suppose, that what you have promised the world to do, you will not do by halves; and therefore I ask you again, to come away with me to the adjourned sessions for the West-Riding of the county of York."

It was in vain that Tremaine protested he was not well enough. Miss Evelyn said it would make him better; Jenkins, too, waited with accounts and plans;—but *that* he himself was glad to put off, though Evelyn opposed it, till he heard that it really did not press for any particular day; and he allowed the excuse the rather, because his wish was to make Tremaine acquainted with his colleagues in the commission, many of whom were concerned in, and all might assist or retard the enclosure.

"You use me like a child," said Tremaine, ringing for his horses.

They were soon mounted: the day was fresh, Georgina looked charmingly, and for a time the Man of Refinement forgot his spleen.

CHAPTER XXI.

DELIGHTS AND DISGUSTS.

I think there's ne'er a man in Christendom
Can lesser hide his hate or love than he.

SHAKSPEARE.

Thou hast appointed Justices of the Peace,
To call poor men before them, about matters
They are not able to answer.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE pensiveness of Tremaine's character was always inclined to unbend in the company of women—particularly of gentlewomen. With all his loftiness, and even his disappointments (as he called them) as to human nature, the sex had a credit with him of which he had

not yet been able to deprive them. There was hence a sort of natural gallantry, a softness in his manner to women, which his fastidiousness in other respects only made the more agreeable.

Of all these was Tremaine's manner made up whenever a woman was concerned, provided only she had not forfeited her claim to them by any conduct of her own; and to see Georgina, was to call into its full life this disposition and manner of Tremaine. It had long indeed been latent, but was not dead; and its very suspension made it burst forth with an animation, which only marked it more in the mind of her to whom it was now directed.

The whole character and appearance of his present companion denoted that modest openness, which, added to grace and real beauty, is so irresistible to the heart of man. Frankness was the predominating feature of her character! but frankness, so tempered by dignity, without effort, that everything seemed to spring from nature herself,—nature in her sweetest and chastest attire!

Totally unconscious that she was the object of his critical observation, uninformed even of his history, except that she had heard from her father much of his worth, as well as of his disgusts, Miss Evelyn acted towards him as she did towards her father himself, the only difference being a little more ceremony in her manner to him. In other respects she was perfectly unconstrained, and joined freely in conversation, or lost herself in silent pleasure, as subjects arose, or the beautiful scenery of Tremaine's park prompted.

Being very fond of riding, and managing her horse with uncommon grace, she challenged him with her father to canter up a long hollow bottom of elastic turf, and gave the word to stop, when an avenue of venerable elms called, as she said, for a slower and more contemplative pace.

Yet all was gentle, though sportive; nothing obtrusive: and whenever the gentlemen talked, her attention to the conversation could only be equalled by the evident intelligence with which she gave it.

Tremaine, on his part, exerted himself, and the exertion

alone gave him spirit and power. He had a rich fund of quotation, which pleased Georgina's taste; and whenever she was pleased, she was at no pains to conceal her pleasure. Could this fail to call up corresponding feelings in Tremaine? No! his eyes and fine features, his whole carriage and manner seemed recreated; and what the most brilliant females of London and Paris had for years been unable to effect, was once again produced, in a few minutes, by a simple country girl.

He was in fact at his ease, very animated, and in danger of becoming enthusiastic, when he checked himself by thinking of much of the past. Insensibly he dropped behind, leaving Evelyn to engross his daughter; and having now left the beautiful precincts of Woodington and Evelyn Hall, and come to the high road, his new and so pleasing study, as well as his more moody recollections of the past, were all lost in the severe annoyance of the dust and heat, to say nothing of the familiarity of the numerous passengers.

Unfortunately, the passengers made no account of him or his refinement; they did not even know him: which he would have thought lucky, had it not given occasion to many stops and introductions, which Evelyn assured him were absolutely necessary.

All this soon called him back to himself; that is, *that* self which time and the chances of the world had made him.

The horrors of the sessions, which Georgina had forced him to forget, were now all before him, and he lost in their contemplation the whole train of those refined ideas, which the solitude of his beautiful park and the grace of his lovely companion had given him.

And, in truth, the scene was not one to inspire a man of refinement, or any one else of delicate nerves, with pleasure. To one of retired habits, even though not under the influence of any particular disgust, it might have brought the reverse. Yet there was a sort of bustling jollity in it, which some might even have called gaiety, and which, by many at least, might have been thought not unamusing. Those, in particular, fond of

contemplating human character in its different shapes, perhaps in its coarser varieties, might here have found abundant food for their speculations.

We will not precisely say, with a late eminent chief magistrate, that the Court of King's Bench is the place where the world may be most advantageously studied; but it is at least certain, that in the admirable ordeal of an English court of justice, and the various scenes connected with it, is to be found a touchstone for the being called Man, of which few can resist the power. Of all the exhibitions of him, perhaps there is none so calculated to shew him as he is,—whether in his windings and turnings, or his straight-forward capacity — his vices, virtues, or abilities—his little or great vanities—as the witness-box. The confessional-chair of the catholic church is nothing to it.

Proceeding all to this field of display, the road was covered with the various actors that were to take part in the scene. The sessions, indeed, promised to be uncommonly crowded, and our travellers passed, or were passed by, all descriptions of his majesty's subjects. Some went to do, some to be undone; some to demand, some to suffer justice. Magistrates on horseback, or in their old post-chaises, which, except on such occasions, or to church when it rained, slumbered the rest of the year in their peaceful coach-houses. Churchwardens, carrying books of rates, discussing on a round trot the merits and chances of the various appeals against them, and perhaps still more the charms of the dinner that was to reward their fatigues at the parish expense. Overseers conducting paupers, who had presumed to marry in settlements not their own; and constables gibing with damsels who, without being married at all, had presumed to forestal the consequences of that happy state.

Many were the attornies in smug brown bobs, or Brutus crops, and trowsers of Russia duck, as their ages and grave or dandy habits decided. Their clerks with saddlebags, in which there were often more papers than linen; and young counsel in their gigs, with portmanteaus, in which there was much more linen than papers.

Oh! for the pen of Yorick or Fielding, that might describe the various emotions and passions, the lines, the shades, and the contortions of countenance, which shewed themselves in the motley group that entered the town at the same time with Evelyn and his companions. A physiognomist might have had excellent practice in unmasking hearts, which, generally locked up, were in this critical time surprised into a little honesty, not indeed as to their actions, but the discovery of their thoughts, spite of all laudable endeavours to conceal them.

Here might be seen an unfortunate churl, determined on indulging the blackness of his revenge, and excusing it to God and himself under the name of justice; there another, balancing whether it were best to marry, or pay more than he could afford, or go to prison; a third revolving the chances of being allowed an extravagant bill of costs; a fourth, in agitation whether a footpath, of which he had robbed the public, in order to make his own place more "melancholy and gentlemanlike," would be taken from him by the bench; a fifth, in fear and trembling whether, if he swore the peace against his helpmate, as he meditated, the protection he might gain would be a greater good, than the increased ill-humour he must suffer for it would be an evil.

One gentleman who passed them, well mounted, and who had his eye on a neighbouring borough, was evidently meditating a speech. Another, who saluted Tremaine, on being introduced, so low, that he almost fell from his horse, was engaged, at the time he came up, in solving the difficult point, whether my lord, the chairman, would bow to him before justice B——, his neighbour, or whether Sir Marmaduke Crabtree, another neighhour, would bow to him at all.

Amongst all these was Tremaine condemned to mix, as soon as he got into the high-road; and the horror of scenes still worse that were yet to come, was not relieved by this specimen of their precursors.

In this situation, his wonder was at its height in beholding his friend, and even his friend's daughter, not only not disturbed, but mingling with cheerfulness in the

scene, and replying to numerous and sometimes very homely greetings, with invariable good-humour. This, and the dust and heat, made him more saturnine than ever. He found himself not well; he wished he had not been in the commission; wished he had not come; wished for even Jenkins and his parchments, rather than be where he was.

Miss Evelyn pitied, yet could not help rallying him.

"Is it possible," said he, "that your father can be pleased, and you not destroyed, by such scenes?"

"I do not know that he is pleased," replied Georgina, "but he is occupied, and thinks it his duty; and I believe it does good, which is saying everything."

"And you?" said Tremaine, inquiringly.

"Oh! I cannot be ill where my father is well; and besides, we enjoy home the more on our return."

"But this vile business is to last, I find, for two days at least; and really (with submission) I cannot help wondering at your father for bringing you: it can be neither fit for you, nor suitable to your taste, to be plunged into such a crowd."

"We don't mind it at the races," said Miss Evelyn.

"But to live at an inn, in the same room almost with savages!"

"I am at a relation's in the town," she replied; "but to tell the truth, whether it is that, like my sex, I love gadding, or that I'm glad to see my father so occupied and so useful, even if I were not so well lodged, I should be sorry to be left behind."

Tremaine brooded and sighed. He wondered that there could be such a difference in tempers and habits; but could not help reflecting upon the happiness of Evelyn, in having such a sweetener of life, in such a daughter.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE COURT.

Though we are justices, doctors, and
Churchmen.—

SHAKSPEARE.

As the court began late, being the first day, there was a very full attendance, and Tremaine underwent the ordeal of an hundred introductions, ninety-nine of which, at the very least, he thought unnecessary; but having put himself into Evelyn's hands, he submitted in very despair. Having retired to an obscure part of the court, he was annoyed by the chairman, who, in more fashionable scenes in town, was his old acquaintance, and who summoned him to take a place close at his side; a station to which his fortune and family-consequence in the county gave him every right.

Lord Bellenden, who thus presided, was a nobleman of great personal respectability, remarkably mild in his manners, and distinguished for integrity and good sense. He had a great portion of what Tremaine called misplaced industry; dedicating himself, in truth, to the interests of the riding of which he was lord-lieutenant, and understanding and administering the business of his useful and important office, even in its minutiæ, with ease to himself and satisfaction to all. He found his reward in the respect of his neighbours, and a content of mind which asserted itself in a very benignant countenance, and a plain but hearty mode of address.

Called upon, in the face of the whole court, to the most conspicuous part of it, Tremaine was forced, in self-defence, to condescend to survey his neighbours, or, as he was shocked to hear them called, his brother magistrates and colleagues in office. Nor could he help being struck with the contrast to one another, which many of them exhibited. The plain manners and appear-

ance of the elder 'squires gave some notion of the simple patriarchal character which might still belong, if he pleased, to the English country gentleman. Not so their sons, who thought the year misspent if they did not pass a considerable part of it in London, where they actually figured with dandy reputation, and were so engaged by the charms of the toilette, that the old hereditary charms of the stable were in a fair way of being forgotten.

As all of these latter were purblind, their glasses, directed towards the women, gave them too constant occupation to attend to the business of the court; and, by degrees, most of them glided off to parties at billiards, or a trotting match made the day before; leaving the cases before them to the care of the chairman, a few of the clergy, and a retired lawyer or two, now become magistrates.

And here, reader, shall we, or not, lament the total loss amongst us of that famed character, the old English country 'squire? Let no fine gentleman, or man of refinement (whether in mere manners or politics, or even in literature), bless himself at our Gothic question, or suppose such a character beneath the moralist's or critic's notice. Though it seems to belong to the mere class of the "*Fruges consumere nati*," with all its apparent insignificance, its important littlenesses, and even its coarseness and tyranny, it has contrived (or it has been contrived for it) to engage our dearest interest. Genius has in fact consecrated it to fame, and painted it in never-dying colours; genius both delicate and strong;—for it has been thought worthy the most amiable touches of Addison, and the sharpest chisel of Fielding. But, ah! these sleep in their graves; and could they revive, they would look in vain for those traits in English life and manners, which in Sir Roger, the Tory fox-hunter, and the better understood, because less delicate Western, enabled them to fix and fascinate the taste and fancy of every age and every disposition.

None of these were here; and even in the elder squires, there was an air of knowledge of the world, and of London manners, that destroyed all notion of

that rustic simplicity, which, from one end of the island to the other, can now only be read off as a thing past and gone.

If there was any stamp of originality, any sharp protuberances of appearance, not rubbed down into general fineness by a general collision with the world, it was in some of the clerical magistrates, who came full of importance, arrayed in full suits of rusty black, and high-topped boots carefully tied over the knee with garters of green ferret or wash-leather. Their uncouthness, and the expression of their formal civilities to all their neighbours, shewed that, except upon such occasions, they scarcely ever quitted their parishes.

Tremaine, though his fortune and family were well known and respected, felt himself isolated in a place in which, however irksome to his fastidiousness, he could not help perceiving that the most useful business was carried on; where good order was strictly cultivated, and justice, on the whole, thoroughly distributed.

Evelyn, too, had begged him to lay aside his refinement, and bear with whatever might occur, at least till he had appreciated it on a fair trial; and he insensibly became less fretful within himself. He also did not fail to remark the deference which all ranks (including even the counsel at the bar) paid to everything that fell from the lips of Evelyn.

In one or two cases, however, which came from his own immediate neighbourhood, where character was concerned, he found himself appealed to by his brother magistrates, and he felt obliged though ashamed to confess his utter ignorance on the subject. He could only excuse himself on the score of his absence from the country; while Dr. Evelyn made up for his want of information, and detailed all that was desired,—which his daily activity fully enabled him to do.

Great questions arose upon a gaol, an infirmary, and a county bridge. As possessing almost the greatest property of any man in the court, Tremaine was here particularly addressed. But he had scarcely heard of

them. His friend, however, took, or rather was called to take a leading part; and though there was much opposition to many of his suggestions, they were almost all carried by a considerable majority.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE DINNER.

> Though we are justices, doctors, and Churchmen.—
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

From the court the Bench adjourned to dinner; and, reader, if thou hast ever had the good fortune to feast thyself in the great room of a great inn in a county town, enlarged by three or four rooms being thrown into one, for the purpose of giving ample space to "their worships," thou wilt figure to thyself the glories of the George, in its triumph over the Fountain.

These two great powers had struggled for pre-eminence for half-a-century; and each with alternate and temporary success. Many, indeed, had been the painful discussions held by the nobility, gentry, and reverend clergy of this far-famed county, as to the respective merits of these powerful rivals, though it was generally observed, that, according as Whiggism or Toryism prevailed in the riding, the feasting was held to be best at the one or the other.

It is not necessary to say more on this subject, important as it is, nor to tell the reader how it happened, that the George at present had got the upper-hand. It is sufficient that it cost one doctor of laws, three masters of arts, and two baronets, two years' painful and persevering struggle, to accomplish this momentous revolution; which, after all, had perhaps never been effected, if, in addition to a continued flow of success to the British

arms abroad, the beef at the Fountain had not, during three-quarters of a year, been, by the confession of all, too little corned!

The landlord of the successful sign, in a new coat of second cloth, with old silver buttons newly brightened, upon which was impressed the image which his sign professed to represent, had now twice announced that the greatest part of the dinner smoked upon the table, and that they only waited the approach of the chairman, to take up the fish; and this message was twice whispered to the chair, through their worships on the right-hand of the court (and, in fact, had produced the instant departure of their said worships, in regular succession, to the no small annoyance of their worships on the left), before the chairman thought proper publicly to announce the happy tidings.

This occasioned a considerable heart-burning; for the favoured ones on the right-hand, who were first entrusted with the secret, and had thus obtained the best places at table, were almost all government men, who had naturally got together on the bench; while the unlucky party, who had as naturally adhered to one another on the other side, glorified themselves in the name of Reformers.

Now, though the chairman was the most equitable of men, and had delayed promulgating the important secret from no other reason than that he was just at that moment in the act of finishing his charge to the jury, on which the imprisonment and whipping of John Hodges, for stealing turkeys, materially depended,—yet, as he was shrewdly suspected of being less unfavourable to ministers than he *had* been, and the landlord who had brought the message, and the clerk of the peace who had forwarded it, being notorious Tories, nothing could persuade the opposite party (whose profession, indeed, was systematic suspicion) that this was any other than a foul conspiracy, to use undue influence in favour of the friends of government, against the rights of the people.

And so, in terms, and on his legs, it was represented

to the noble chairman, by a gentleman known by the name of Counsellor Gloom.

This worthy gentleman was neither more nor less than a disappointed barrister, who, having no business, but some fortune, thought it better to look after the last than wait upon the first, and had for some time, therefore, retired upon his estate. Lord Bellenden, contrary to the wishes of many of the neighbouring gentlemen, had not thought it right to refuse his request to be placed in the commission; which he repaid by seeking all occasions of opposing his measures and opinions; and so great was his zeal, that his exertions seemed most agreeable to himself when the occasion was most personal to Lord B.

It was in vain that this nobleman, upon being thus attacked, instantly suspended the operation of carving, in which he was engaged,—to the great annoyance of the Reverend Dr. Juniper, the well-endowed rector of Tremaine's parish at Woodington; who, though in nothing else, resembled in one point that celebrated character with whom all classical readers are acquainted—we mean Parson Supple. The resemblance consisted in being remarkable for silence at dinner. In all other points we confess there was little similitude; as the Doctor was in possession of a fat living, and would never have consented to go to Basingstoke to fetch his patron's tobacco-box, even supposing so horrible a solecism as that Mr. Tremaine could have indulged in so filthy a thing.

This reverend gentleman had long waited for a slice of smoking turbot, which, at last, was actually on the chairman's *spatula;* and it was in vain that he gave an example of candour, by speaking to order, and observing, that however he might agree with his honourable and learned friend, he thought his observations *ill-timed.*

The learned counsel persisted,—observing that for his part he could not conceive any time like the time present for such a question; and adding, with a shake of the head, that he did not wonder at the universal corruption of the state, when many of his honourable

friends themselves, with whom in general he was proud to act, had so far forgotten the spirit of their ancestors as on any consideration to delay the discussion of the rights of Englishmen.

This speech was cheered by half-a-dozen of the discontented side, particularly by a thin, jejune-looking young man, a physician, who had studied more of Price and Priestley, and the philosophers of the French Encyclopædia, than Boerhaave or Sydenham, and who offered himself as seconder to any motion his honourable and learned friend might make upon the subject.

This little disturbance (which, however, had awakened Tremaine into observation) being composed, by the postponement of the consideration of its subject till after dinner, the business of dinner went on in good earnest.

As soon as it was over, however, and the health of the King was proposed, the disgusted counsellor, having marshalled a small but faithful band, began the attack, by observing, "that though his Majesty had not a more loyal subject than himself, yet there were rights more dear to Englishmen than even the health of the King" (a great groan from most, with "hear! hear!" from the physician); "that privilege, and equality of treatment, were among them, and that therefore, though the toast ought certainly to be drunk, he expressly rose to urge its postponement, until the great affront that had been put upon his part of the table had been investigated, and its authors ascertained and properly censured." This was seconded by the physician, but a shew of hands deciding in the negative by a great majority, the standing toasts were all drunk, and Sir Marmaduke Crabtree, who was in the House of Commons, rose to move that the accusation should be voted frivolous and vexatious. This produced a short debate, which might have been longer, had not Evelyn shewed the ridicule of the whole proceeding so forcibly, and at the same time so good-humouredly, that it dropt. The conversation then subsided into a discussion of the cases that had occurred in court, mixed with excursions into the game and

militia laws, sporting, and other topics of the same laudable nature.

Foreign politics were of course not forgotten, for there had been a partial discourse at the upper end of the table, in which the retreat of Buonaparte to Elba was discussed. Sir Marmaduke, who was staunch for government, said it was all over with him; that he at first had been for putting him to death, but that it was better to let him live in disgrace, in a place where he might always be seized if necessary.

"That's just what my newspaper says," observed a Mr. Placid, who sat near him, and who was a gentleman remarkable for his great deference to all his superiors, particularly his wife.

Now Sir Marmaduke valued himself on his large estate, and not a little, when among his brother 'squires, upon his seat in parliament; and he besides looked down upon Placid, not merely because he had not half his number of acres, but because he was a timid, subtle man, who lived almost entirely at home.

Not liking the observation, therefore, he rather roughly answered, "Sir, it is my own opinion. I think for myself, and don't gather my notions from newspapers."

"Nor I," said Placid, "only it is wonderful how all the newspaper says comes right."

"No newspaper knows anything at all about the matter," observed Sir Marmaduke, in a tone of sovereign contempt (but so as to make it uncertain whether he meant it for Placid or the newspaper), "that is except as government chooses to tell them."

"So I suppose," ventured Placid, who seemed afraid, yet resolved to try his strength in a public conversation. "I am sure I cannot pretend to know things as you do, Sir Marmaduke."

"Why no," continued the baronet, relaxing, 'there you are right; I am what you may call at the fountain-head, and see the minister every day in the house, and speak to him too whenever I wish it; and I told him the last time I saw him, that I thought the Emperor of

Russia was a great deal too magnanimous, and courted popularity too much, like one of us members, I said, and that the French would soon presume upon it."

"Dear me," exclaimed Placid, "that's all in the newspapers, too."

The baronet looked ferocious, and damned the newspapers; when Placid, in a humble tone, asked his opinion of the value of Elba; adding, that he heard it was remarkably strong.

"Why look you, sir," said the baronet, half angry, half pleased with the conceit that had just struck him, "what signifies a strong island against an English ship of the line? and as for its fertility, I am a fox-hunter, though you, I believe, never saw a hound in your life—and I should be glad to know if there are any good fox whins in the whole island of Elba? and if there are not, pray what is its value? answer me that!"

Placid, drawing in, protested he knew nothing about the matter.

So I thought," cried Sir Marmaduke, "and therefore I think we had better talk of something we all of us understand."

The tone in which this was uttered, was quite hint enough for Placid to discover he had gone too far. He had satisfied his ambition in venturing to talk to Sir Marmaduke in public, and by no means wished to offend him. He was in fact one of those beings sometimes to be met with, who have much awkward shyness but no real modesty; whose vanity is perpetually pushing them beyond their place, into which they are made to shrink in a moment, when the silly flattery by which they hope to succeed is refused or repelled.

Sir Marmaduke then turned to Tremaine, for whom he had some respect, on account of his large property, but chiefly as an old member of parliament, and very familiarly asked him why they had seen nothing of him that winter at St. Stephen's?

Tremaine was annoyed at the suddenness of a question, by no means agreeable in itself; he had sat upon tenter-hooks during the whole conversation, which gave him no

liking for his overbearing neighbour, and he shrank from the interrogation with a disgust very little concealed.

Evelyn, however, interposed, and said.

"It is not every one, Sir Marmaduke, who has a constitution that can bear late nights, and hot houses, like you."

"Why true! I never miss a division," remarked the baronet, complacently.

"And what have you got by it?" asked Dr. Juniper, who had hitherto been silent.

"That's neither here nor there," answered Sir Marmaduke, nodding significantly.

"Mr. Tremaine has not had good health, and has lately been detained here, upon very particular business. in which he hopes you may, for you can, help him," said Dr. Evelyn.

"As how?" asked the baronet, with an air of dignity.

Evelyn then begged to change places with Tremaine, and detailed in a few words the interest Tremaine had in the inclosure, and the assistance which Sir Marmaduke's consent and support would give him.

"And why does he not ask it himself?" demanded the baronet, loud enough for the party to hear him.

"He is a reserved man," said Evelyn, "and is at present not in good health."

"He is on the wrong side," observed the baronet, "and calls himself a Whig—now I call myself a Whig, too, but it is an old one, for I am for the King, and for Hanover, and you know at the beginning of the French Revolution—"

Evelyn trembled, for he was in the jaws of a gulph from which he knew he should not soon escape, when luckily louder voices, and disputes growing warmer and warmer close by them, for that time saved him.

The baronet, however, who really respected Evelyn, exclusive of his being on the same side in politics, and all the country interests (no small ingredient), finding that his own advantage or disadvantage was not at all concerned in it, promised that consent to the Doctor for his friend, which he certainly would have refused to his friend himself.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PRIVACY.

> But that your royalty holds idleness your subject,
> I should take you for idleness itself.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

"If this is Evelyn's world *in* which and *for* which we are born," said Tremaine to himself, the morning after he got home;—"if these are the charms of society" (and he sauntered up and down the great dining-room, in a meditating, picktooth sort of a manner) "*I* at least have no wish to return to it."

"No!" he continued, taking up a Horace, where he bids adieu to the '*Fumum strepitusque Romæ*,' "every one has his own maxims and pattern of life, and be thou mine, thou choice and refined spirit—thou knewest how to live with *men*, though not perhaps,"—(and he paused, taking a stride or two before he finished the sentence)—"not with country justices."

At this moment Jenkins appeared.

"Not now, my good friend," said the refined master, "I am at present too much at my ease to interrupt it with trash."

"No!" persisted he (gently pushing his steward out of the room, and coming back to his chair, as if he had done a great feat), "such tranquillity, after such a storm, shall not be ruffled again but by my own fault."

The door in closing upon Jenkins seemed to close upon all that Tremaine could fear, and left him in possession of all he professed to wish for.

The sun blazed full upon the garden-door, at which he stopt at almost every turn, alternately gazing at the glories it presented, and again communing with the agreeable heathen he was so fond of. His nerves had never been so little irritated.

"I know not how, or why," said he aloud, and looking

abroad, " but solitude seems to have peculiar charms for me this morning."

" What will you give me, and I'll tell you both the how and the why," said Evelyn, stealing in behind him.

" I'm afraid it will baffle even your philosophy," said his friend," shaking hands with him.

" No! it confirms it all," replied Evelyn, " for it proves my favourite tenet of the necessity of earning our tranquillity. You have *earned* it for a little while, by the two days' sacrifice you made to duty. It was a very painful one, I allow," continued he, perceiving that Tremaine looked dissentingly; " but, upon the whole, you behaved well, and for all your sour looks, my 'dukedom to a beggarly denier,' but your present placidity is owing entirely to the interruption there has been to the sameness of an unoccupied life."

" I deny the unoccupied," answered Tremaine, glancing at his Horace; " and as to the sameness, I also deny that it can possibly flow the better for such an interruption."

" That babbling brook yonder," observed Evelyn, looking out, " contradicts you better than I can: you see its natural flow is like the placid Arar, which you, and I, and Cæsar before us, have noticed and admired."

" Truce with your learning," exclaimed Tremaine; " for what has all this to do with solitude."

" An illustration merely," said the Doctor, " the first that came to hand, but none the worse for that. You see the three or four little rocks, or rather mere stones, in the bottom of the brook, that impede its natural gentleness; and you also see how much the faster, how much more brisk, and lively, and petulant it flows; with what vivacity it sings, as it were, with joy, as it rattles from stone to stone, and how its increased rapidity continues for almost half a furlong, all in consequence of the little struggle to get free."

" You are quite poetic this morning," said Tremaine.

" Only a little oratorical," answered the Doctor, " but in good truth it speaks a volume. The sessions are the rock"—

" On which I split," said Tremaine.

"Too common-place," observed Evelyn, "and not correct either; for instead of splitting, I am sadly out if they have not sent you more merrily on your voyage."

"You might as well duck me in the horsepond, and say I was the happier," retorted Tremaine.

"Perhaps a better remedy than all," replied the Doctor.

"But seriously, my old friend," pursued the fastidious recluse, "do you yourself think the scenes we went through agreeable?"

"That is not the point," answered Evelyn: "I do not think physic agreeable, but yet I am forced sometimes to take it."

"Then you own a bench of justices are a dose of physic."

"It is for my purpose to do so," rejoined the practical moralist, "for physic makes me enjoy myself after it is over, and so do the sessions."

"Then you had no pleasure; and if your mind had been in health, you would not have visited them?"

"Not absolutely so."

"With your tastes, how could it be otherwise?"

"We did good," replied Evelyn, "and that was a palpable gain."

"This may be very true," said Tremaine; "but you must allow that most of the people whom we were compelled to associate with were quizzes; and I must laugh at a quiz wherever I find him."

"Have a care that he does not laugh at you," answered Evelyn; "and indeed I question very much whether a hale constitution, and hearty though boisterous cheerfulness, have not a thousand times more reason to laugh, than a splenetic mind in a body sick with refinement."

"You are cruel," said Tremaine.

"Only a faithful friend," replied Evelyn: "besides, I'm jealous for the honour of the cloth, and my brother magistrates; and as we slave without reward, to keep you in security, depend upon it the world will give us our due, though a fine gentleman refuse it. We ask who this fine gentleman is? what right he has to despise

us? and we find, perhaps, that it is founded upon his wearing boots with white tops instead of brown, and being perfectly idle while we work."

"My dear friend," said Tremaine, "you cannot suspect me of alluding to you!"

"Perhaps not; but I am no better than those to whom you did allude; perhaps inferior to them. Many of them are worthy, some of them wise, all with a certain cultivation of intellect; uncouthness (where they are uncouth) soon wears off; and depend upon it, real usefulness must in the end meet with its reward, in real respectability."

Tremaine felt pushed—but rallying, exclaimed, "what would you say to Dr. Juniper passing up St. James's Street, while White's or Boodle's were full of fashionable critics?"

"Why though fashion is arbitrary enough," answered Evelyn, "she yet binds those only who choose to acknowledge her laws; now what if these grave personages were to laugh at fashion, as much as fashion could for the life of her laugh at *them?*'

"Impossible!" said Tremaine.

"Not only possible, but, I believe, very true: for, *not being one of the sect,* they may at least despise as much as they are despised."

Tremaine smiled contemptuously.

"And yet for all that smile of contempt, it is the plain account," continued the Doctor; and the honest sailor, who laughed at the Frenchman, for calling a hat a *chapeau,* was not more impotent in his criticism than the critics you mention would be towards persons who are not their subjects. It is only the votaries of a particular deity, who can be hurt at having their incense refused: and a Protestant might as well be mortified at being refused holy water by the Pope, as that an unfashionable person, who thinks of higher, or even only of different things, should feel any thing from the sneer of a *petit-maître.*"

"Very sententious, and very fine in theory," said Tremaine, "but always contradicted in practice: for however bold we all are in our closets, and our gardens

(here the two disputants insensibly had strolled into the garden), however firm we may feel among our parishioners and our clowns, I fear the world resumes its hold upon us the moment we return to it: and though you have naturally the *maintien noble* belonging to your family, you yourself, my dear Doctor—"

"Would be quizzed," interrupted Evelyn, "in St. James's Street: and you yourself would be afraid to walk by White's with me;—is that what you would say?"

"Not exactly the last, at least not now, whatever I might have been ten years ago.'

"But the first?" said Evelyn.

"Why if you did happen to be quizzed, I should like to know how, with all your wisdom, you would bear it," said Tremaine.

"I once was in that *most trying* situation," said Evelyn, drily.

Now, amongst Tremaine's weaknesses, we have not concealed his love of fashion, spite of ten thousand professions, which all went to level it at the feet of philosophy. Often had he been known say, that a wise man was always independent of a thing so fleeting, so intrinsically insignificant; yet no man more accurately than himself exacted, and paid the full measure of consideration which it demanded. Born a man of quality, though born also for something better, he gave a consequence in the world to a thousand things, which in his closet he said were of no consequence at all. To be quizzed, much more to be what is called *cut* by any one, never, indeed, entered his contemplation; but had it so happened, though by a duke, or royalty itself, it would have been a crime *læsæ majestatis*, never to be forgiven

With this disposition, he was not unobservant of that tyrannous power which certain sprigs of fashion, and certain men of wit, in the fashionable clubs, exercise over every body else, in all the points that are deemed legitimate objects of quizzing. Their despotism is so great, that not even *he* stopt to ascertain its real nature, or how it came to be acquired. It was enough that all bowed, or seemed to bow to it; and he had himself sat sufficiently

often in the window at White's, to conceive almost as high an idea of its power, as a judge has of the dignity of the bench.

His detractors (for he had them) went, indeed, so far as to say, the only man for whom he ever shewed any real deference was a certain beau, who, spite of all his want of birth, fortune, and connexion, had, by the force of a masterly genius, acquired such an ascendancy over the dandies, as to be called their sovereign.

It is certain this beau had not spared Tremaine, who, he said, with all his claims to reputation (which on the whole he was disposed to allow), had yet an original defect in his education, in having studied the law. It was observed that Tremaine not only forgave this piece of temerity, but conceived a high respect for the genius, abilities, and powers of him who was guilty of it, and there was a sort of fashionable alliance between them ever afterwards.

From all this, he was curious to hear the Doctor's answer to his question, how he would bear quizzing at White's?"

They had now reached the lawn, and had fallen into a sort of lounging pace.

"I think," said the Doctor, with dry gravity, looking at his boots, and switching them with his whip, "I think I'm pretty well, even now, though an oldish sort of a person; and if I were this moment to pass through St. James's Street, I really don't see the right which my Lord A. or B. would have to laugh at me; at least I might, with some exertion of philosophy, bear it—perhaps even laugh at them."

"Oh! you are perfectly well," said Tremaine, "and with your dignitary's hat, might even command respect."

"I'm afraid you flatter; but give me leave to ask what would be the effect if I were to appear in a grenadier's cap?"

"You would be not quizzed—but hooted."

"And why more than Lord A. himself, who wears his in the same place every time he is on guard?"

"*He* is in his place," replied Tremaine; "*you* would be out of it."

"Exactly so; and you see therefore, it is the being in

and out of one's place, and not this or that appearance, that exposes one to be legitimately quizzed."

"Legitimately quizzed!" exclaimed Tremaine.

"Yes!" you see I give the subject all scientific dignity; and, in truth, it is quite important enough to rank among the scienees."

"I'm afraid *you* are now quizzing *me*," said Tremaine.

"Far from it: I only wished to give due honour to what seemed to you of such importance. To proceed then. I hinted that, for quizzing to take effect, there must be two parties, the agent and patient, the quizzer and quizzee."

"Scientific, indeed," replied Tremaine.

"But," continued Evelyn, "there must also be yet something inherent in both parties for the success of the enterprise; something like wit, or at least some personal, or seemingly personal superiority in the quizzer, and some pre-disposition, or rather pre-adaption in the quizzee, to allow that he is quizzed."

"I admire your precision," said Tremaine.

"Well then," proceeded Evelyn, "what if the quizzee (wrapt in his virtue and a good surtout) not only deny to himself the assumed superiority of the quizzer, but feel himself the superior of the two."

"Give me an illustration," said Tremaine.

"The gay courtier, in King Charles the First's time," answered Evelyn; "he who piqued himself so much upon his fine clothes; and because he had a better tailor, thought himself a better man than Oliver Cromwell."

"You mean Sir Philip Warwick," said Tremaine, "and I remember the passage: but what has it to do with quizzing."

"A great deal," replied Evelyn; "for in the place I allude to, he was the quizzer, and Oliver the quizzee. 'We courtiers,' he says, 'valued ourselves much upon our good clothes; and when I first saw Oliver, he seemed a gentleman very ordinarily clad, in a plain suit, made, as it should seem, by an ill country tailor; his linen not very clean, his hat without a hatband, and his sword stuck on awkwardly.' Sir Philip says of himself, that he then

vainly thought himself a courtly young gentleman, and was here evidently quizzing the man who afterwards became his master; for I remember he goes on to say, 'And yet I lived to see this very person (having had a better tailor), and when I was his prisoner at Whitehall, appear in my eyes of a very comely presence.' Notwithstanding this quiz of him, Oliver, according to the quizzer himself, was very much hearkened to, and, as I humbly conceive, did not care one pinch of snuff for the sneers of Sir Philip at his country tailor."

"You have a strange way of bringing in your reading!" said Tremaine. "But I should like to have something still more practical. You were going to tell me how you felt when you thought yourself quizzed. Come, let us have the time, place, and parties. As to the fairness of the account, *that* I think I can depend on."

"I have no interest in giving any other," said Evelyn. "As to time, then, it was twenty years ago; as to place, the very spot we have just been talking of; and the parties were the very people you quote as so redoubtable."

"Well! your feelings? for at five-and-twenty, I do not apprehend they were the same as now."

"Certainly not.—

> Lenit albescens animos capillus,
> Litium et rixæ cupidos protervæ,
> Non ego hoc ferrem, calidus juventa,
> Consule Planco.

To tell you the truth, my first impulse was to knock them down."

"Excellent!" said Tremaine; "you see *in* the world and *out* of it, are very different. And how did you get the better of this impulse?"

"Why, at first by a very simple process. It occurred to me that, as there were half-a-dozen of them, it was not improbable *I* should be knocked down myself. After this, I fortunately asked myself rather a necessary question; namely, whether, in point of fact, they were really laughing at any body, much less at me?"

"That certainly was prudent; but I thought you had proof!"

"No other than that they were in the act of laughing, and that their eyes looked at me as I passed by."

"Rather slight," said Tremaine.

"So slight, that after I had swallowed my *impulse*, I began to laugh too, for being as great a fool as Scrub in the play, who said, 'I am sure they were talking of me, for they laughed consumedly.' My next question was, what I could have about my person, manner, or character, to be laughed at? and finding nothing, I laughed more at myself than I am sure they did, even supposing I had been their object."

"I am afraid," said Tremaine, "this, after all, does not apply. But suppose you had really been quizzed?"

"Why, had it been made manifest by rudeness, I should have been forced, in my own defence, on my first impulse."

"But suppose," continued Tremaine, "it had been a mere mental quizzing, not manifest enough to be resented, yet evidently existing: has that ever been your situation?"

"It has," returned Evelyn, "but it was put down at once."

"As how?" asked Tremaine.

"Why, by the very simple act of passing themselves in review in my own mind, as they were doing by me in theirs; and finding some of them to be fools, some knaves, and all of them profligates, I became the quizzer in my turn."

"Surely," said Tremaine, "you do not treat the matter fairly; you cannot mean that all the young men of fashion are of this character?"

"Certainly not, and neither are all men of fashion quizzers; we are talking of the *few*, and, I should say, the refuse of them; for such, in my day, were those who indulged in the license we are discussing. All of them were gamblers, and therefore profligate; most of them silly, and therefore contemptible; and some of them guilty of crimes for which they ought to have been hanged."

"What can you mean?" said Tremaine.

"Adulteries and seductions," answered Evelyn.

"Mere gallantry, they would have phrased it," returned Tremaine.

"Gallantry!" exclaimed Evelyn; "how many crimes of the most fatal, as well as the most atrocious dye, are encouraged, and indeed permitted, under this horrible miscalling of names? But observe, I mean not simple gallantry, which is, however, bad enough in itself—I mean the most aggravated cases of deliberate destruction to the honour and peace of families. These are to be found daily among the *quizzers* whom you bid me fear. Rather paint them in truer colours, and say they are themselves objects of pity, even should the world they have injured be able to forgive and forget them."

There was an impressiveness in Evelyn's tone and manner as he said this, which inspired Tremaine with the truest veneration for his friend; and during the pause which ensued, they reached the bridge over the little river which divides Woodington from Evelyn Hall, and took leave of each other.

CHAPTER XXV.

JE NE SÇAIS QUOI.

Ah me! how sweet is love itself possest,
When but love's shadows are so rich in joy.

SHAKSPEAR

"It is extraordinary," said Tremaine to himself, as he parted from his friend; "it is very extraordinary, how the genius of this man seems to rebuke mine on almost every subject."

This was a great concession, and Tremaine bit his lip as he made it. He was forced, however, to confess that there had been much good sense in Evelyn's last argument; and he began to believe that Dr. Juniper himself

might possibly be able to walk up St. James's Street with impunity.

He was evidently the better for the Doctor's visit, and his mind being roused to action, felt a sort of dread at shrinking back upon itself. It seemed to crave for food; and none better offering, he even sent for Jenkins and his papers—to the great delight of that respectable straight-forward gentleman, whose whole happiness consisted in method, who ate, drank, slept, and even conversed with Mrs. Jenkins herself by rule, and was, in short, an entire contrast to his master. The summons, therefore, to attend at the hall, was most gladly obeyed. Indeed it released him from a situation almost as irksome as the master himself had ever known; for it was after his dinner, and though Mrs. Jenkins sat beside him, knitting a pair of white cotton hose, with which she meant to decorate her matron legs the very next Sunday at church, and observed three several times how comfortable it was to have Mr. Jenkins with her of an afternoon, the steward himself was much too profitable a servant not to think it rather thrown away. Having nothing, therefore, particularly to do, he betook himself to sleep, after trying a problem in Wingate's arithmetic, which had often baffled him before, and continued to puzzle him still.

The accounts being called for, Jenkins was alive in a moment; and Tremaine being in a happy train, with a clear and active intellect, much business was done to the satisfaction of both.

The undulations, however, occasioned by the sessions, and Evelyn's conversation, soon subsided into the usual monotony and the usual indecision. The difficulties of the inclosure had been gradually smoothed away, principally through the industry and influence of Evelyn—that Evelyn for whose company he began daily to wish, and whom, though but two miles off, he could not muster up exertion enough to seek.

His daughter, too, the young, the fair, the animated, the accomplished—a country girl, yet full of cultivation—a recluse, yet full of grace!

"They are not so kind as usual," said he one day, looking from his terrace at the grey pediments of Evelyn Hall; "they have not been here these ten days. And yet may they not say the same of me? I will go and call upon them," added he; "it is downright ill-breeding not to do it."

Once in his saddle, his exertion became so great that he even made a diversion towards some cottages, which he said offended the view from Woodington, and which he had thoughts of replacing by a temple, such as he had erected at Belmont. "I will consult my neighbours about it," said he, "and Georgina shall give me a design."

He was soon at the house, and had pulled the old fashioned bell at the gate, whose loud echoes gave the signal of alarm to all the peaceful inhabitants within, whether biped or quadruped; to say nothing of all the dogs and all the children of the village without, who seemed more interested in the visiters of the rector squire, than the rector squire himself.

A servant, with a brace of Evelyn's pointers, to whom the guardianship of the fore-court was generally assigned, greeted him at the outer gate, and he was saved all ceremonious inquiry by the sight of Georgina herself, who on the steps of the porch welcomed him with the grace of a nymph.

Among Tremaine's peculiar and lofty notions might be ranked those respecting the ceremonies between the sexes. It was not, as may have been seen, that he was cold in his nature, or even that he was of the *vieille cour*, though leaning perhaps a little that way; but as his general reserve shunned every kind of *familiarity*, he was disposed to view, with very little approbation, the perfect ease and *nonchalance* that mark the beaux and belles of the present day.

Miss Lyttleton, a northern unmarried lady, remarkable for skill in horsemanship and fondness for the chace, as well as for saying and doing every thing else more like a man than a woman (so as to be better known by the name of Jack Lyttleton), passed him one day in the field, and, by way of bravado, laid her whip, with no

gentle hand, across his shoulders. It was observed that he never forgave it, and said at the time that he would almost as soon have been struck by a man; nor could he ever bear the name of the offender afterwards.

It was not that Tremaine was devoid of good-nature, or could not bear a joke; nor was it that his dignity was of so stiff a kind as not to yield to the vivacity of a gay lady; but it was his feeling for the sex that was hurt, in whose *retenue*, he said, the delicacy and happiness of the men found their best safeguards. Every thing about this fair enemy, therefore, became disgusting; and as she was celebrated for giving very hearty shakes of the hand to all her male acquaintance, it was perhaps from this that a female stretching out her hand to a gentleman, became almost a crime in his notions of the decencies between the sexes.

This crime did Georgina now commit; but in a manner so modest and yet so *naïve*, so gladsome and yet so feminine, that as he could not refuse her proffered hand, so he could scarcely blame, if he did not even almost approve, the act itself.

Miss Evelyn received him with reproaches as well as smiles. "Do you know, Mr. Tremaine," said she, "my father thinks you are tired of your neighbours? and by his directions I had almost written you a note yesterday, to say that he thought you *cut* us, and that he was so mortified and confused, that—"

She hesitated.

"Pray go on," said Tremaine· what was to follow this just accusation?"

"Why, that he should be forced to put his own rule into practice, and *cut* you in return."

"And you, my fair friend, if I may call you so?"

"Nay, not if we are to *cut* one another," said Georgina.

"Well, friend or enemy, what did you say, or think, at the meditation of such a note?"

"Why, I supposed it grew out of some of your conversations; for my father said he had been having a battle, as usual, with you, and he was only more and

more convinced that you cared more for the world than you believed: that was all!"

"And may I ask my friend's daughter what she thinks?"

"Oh! you know I always think with Papa, which is very convenient, for he is generally right, and it saves trouble."

"You think, then, that I care for the world—that I wish to return to it?"

"I do not think you hate it, if only for a reason which I have just been reading here," said Georgina.

Tremaine did not perceive before that she had a book in her hand. It was Marmontel: her finger was on the "*misanthrope corrigé*," and upon being asked the passage, she read with the prettiest voice and accent in the world, "*un misanthrope qui l'est par vertu, ne croit haïr les hommes que parcequ'il les aime.*"

"*Vous me croyez donc misanthrope?*" said Tremaine, not at all displeased with the application, and with more alacrity than he had for a long time shewn.

"Not exactly," said Georgina; "but I agree with my father in that, too, that you were made for better things than to shut yourself up either at Woodington or Belmont."

From that moment there was a something which cannot exactly be analyzed, but which played through the heart of Tremaine, and wrapped itself round the idea of Georgina, so as ever afterwards to accompany it. It was not love; it was not confirmed friendship, which is of a much slower growth; it was not altogether vanity, though compounded of it; nor gratitude, though the compliment was felt; but it was that complacency, always so sweet in the beginning of an attachment, which never fails to be thought of with delight, whatever becomes of the attachment itself: and from that complacency Tremaine never departed.

"Well, but," said Tremaine, following his young hostess, as she moved from the hall into the morning room, "you do not surely brand a man with misanthropy, because he chooses not to live in a crowd?"

"Oh no!" she replied, "for many a misanthrope has fed his hatred in a crowd, and many a benevolent person lives alone."

"The justness of your sentiment charms me," exclaimed Tremaine.

"It might," said Georgina, "if I could recommend it in such language as I have lately been reading, for the twentieth time I believe, between my father and myself; for we cannot tire of it."

Her eye glanced on an open quarto as she spoke.

"I see at once what you mean," observed Tremaine, taking up Childe Harold, "and to be sure no poetry was ever so happy in its subject, no subject so ennobled by its poetry, as in these golden lines. I envy the man who can thus feel, and thus write."

"For his writing, yes! but as to his feeling," answered Georgina, "I cannot envy one who seems to take so false a view of mankind."

"Your age, and your happiness with your father, and, no doubt, your other friends (for many must you have)," said Tremaine, with a tenderness of look not unremarked by Georgina, "make that a very natural sentiment: but I grieve to think how very little time longer even you will remain in the world, before you find the solitude of a crowd which this writer so feelingly describes; how soon you will observe

> Minions of splendour, shrinking from distress,
> None that with kindred consciousness endued,
> If we were not, would seem to smile the less,
> Of all that flatter'd, follow'd, sought, and sued!"—

"I would rather," replied Georgina, "think the world what I am sure heaven designed it to be, and not what you would make it. Should we have this sun," continued she, looking at the open windows, "that gilds every thing with cheerfulness, and this concert of birds, which, while it exhilarates the heart, is offered to us all, if we might not be happy if we pleased? I never behold such a day without being grateful, and thinking it a *fête*. Nay, I am disposed to be a votary to Mademoiselle St. Sillery's

philosophy, and to believe that it requires almost an effort to be unhappy when the sun shines *."

"You prefer, then, the previous lines of this professed lover of solitude," said Tremaine, turning again to the passage.

"I do," said Georgina, "but should like to hear them all again."

Tremaine willingly obliged her, and with great pathos recited the passage beginning, "To sit on rocks, &c."

"My father says," observed Georgina, when Tremaine had ceased reading, "that there is not a word of these lovely lines that does not carry poetry to the heart."

"I'm glad there is any thing," said Tremaine, "in which your father and I can entirely agree: and is not he at least in rapture with the whole thought?"

"'Tis at best a melancholy one," answered Miss Evelyn, with a sort of sigh, and I should pity the author, if I did not feel the force of what my father says (I agree with him there, too), that in one so young it cannot be genuine."

"Not genuine!" exclaimed Tremaine. "I should want no other proof than the glowing nature that breathes through every line of the description."

"And yet poetry is but fiction," said Georgina, smiling: "and if there are *fictitious* distresses in real life, what may there not be in poetry?"

She said this with an archness which Tremaine did not exactly relish; and, apparently with a view to change the subject, he exclaimed, "But where is your father all this time?"

"You will find him, I dare say, among his friends there," replied Miss Evelyn, looking out.

"His friends! I did not know you had visiters."

"No! they are our fellow-inhabitants, and daily

* Mademoiselle St. Sillery was a gay and pleasing French girl, mentioned in Pinkney's Tour through France. Sir William Temple also says (though more in the spirit of a philosopher than a sentimentalist), "The sun, in our climate at least, has something so reviving, that a fair day is a kind of sensual pleasure."

companions," she added, turning her eyes to the rookery; "they are particularly busy and talkative just now; and though he went to Belford this morning, yet as I know his horses are come back, and he has escaped from me, I should not be surprised if he were among the only live people I believe he prefers to me—the rooks and crows."

"Rooks and crows!" returned Tremaine, with an expression very like contempt; "what can he possibly see in them to fill a mind like his, much less make up for such a daughter?"

"Thank you," said Miss Evelyn, "but I am almost as fond of them myself."

"I hope some reason can be given for it."

"Then, I think, you had better consult my father in person," said she, "for see, he is now at the bottom of the walk."

They sallied out together. Tremaine observing drily, "that he supposed it market-day at Belford, which of course as a farmer, if not as a 'squire, the Doctor attended."

Georgina assured him he would have been right as to the attendance, had there been a market, but that this time he had gone on a little private business: "which, though he has pretended to be anxious about it for this week past, I dare say, after all, he has not accomplished."

"May I venture to ask what it is?" said Tremaine.

"Neither more nor less than the purchase of a bust, or a vase, for one of his book-cases," returned Georgina; an assortment of which the crockery man at Belford sent him word he had just received."

"Astonishing!" thought Tremaine, but he was silent.

By this time they had joined the Doctor, who was sitting on a bench, with his eyes following his black subjects through a thousand airy circles; and his ears seemingly delighted with what struck Tremaine as a horrible noise.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OCCUPATION AND RETIREMENT.

The crow makes wing to the rooky wood.
SHAKSPEARE.

Will you sit down with me, and we two will rail against our mistress, the world, and all our misery.
SHAKSPEARE.

After the first salutation, "Well, papa," said Georgina smiling, "have you bought your bust?"

"No, my dear, I have not."

"I really thought so," returned she, and her smile turned into a laugh; "I even said to Mr. Tremaine, that although you went on purpose for it, you would come back empty-handed."

"You are at least a true prophetess; but why did you prophesy?"

"I guessed."

"Well, then, thy guess?"

asked Evelyn, good-humouredly.

"That you might have the pleasure of another ride for it to-morrow."

"My girl knows me well," said the delighted father. "If the weather is fine, and my mare carries me as well to-day, I shall, I dare say, overcome my objection, and return for the bust to-morrow."

"And pray what was the objection?" said Tremaine, with curiosity.

"I thought it a shilling all too dear," answered Evelyn.

"A shilling! and with six or eight miles there and back, is it possible you could have hesitated for a shilling?"

"Even so," said Evelyn, coolly; "nay, what is more, upon second thoughts, I think the thing cheap."

"Then why not have bought it?"

"I did not think so at the moment, and it was but going again."

"Good heavens!" said Tremaine, in a sort of triumph, "is this the value which you men of method put upon your time? To what must you practical people, after all, be reduced, when a trumpery piece of plaster, or perhaps a tea-cup, costs two journeys, and a great deal of calculation, in a very wise head too, to get it?"

"And very well bestowed," answered Evelyn, "for I assure you I have got already all I intended by it, and that was not a little."

"For heaven's sake, what?—"

"I got rid of the spleen."

"I told you so," observed Georgina.

"But I thought you never had the spleen?" retorted Tremaine.

"Not often; but I cannot help my constitution, which generates bile; and all I have for it is to understand and cure its defects. I felt growing out of humour from a two-days' laziness; and therefore endeavoured to *make a little business*, in order to be obliged to ride. The remedy has done wonders already; and, to complete my cure, I came to my friends the practical philosophers here."

Just at these words, the rooks, at a seeming signal from a distant sentinel who was flying aloof, became particularly clamorous, till all flew off in several divisions to a neighbouring field, where they landed, and seemed (having first again planted sentinels around them) engaged in busy conclave, which lasted several minutes.

"I would give something to make them out," said Evelyn.

"And I to make you out," observed Tremaine, "for in truth such a compound of wisdom and trifling (excuse me) I never knew."

"Why the trifling of a wise man is always respectable, you know," said the Doctor; "I only wish you would make out your first proposition, and prove my wisdom. But suppose this a mere bagatelle; one of the most acute

of understandings once relied for happiness upon his famous maxim of *vive la bagatelle* !* Another, almost as shrewd, and full of wit and high breeding, spent at least an amused life professedly in trifles †. It is at least as good as counting the waves, after the manner of Cicero, when he was out of humour, like other patriots, because the state would not do as he would have it."

Tremaine reddened.

" But I deny," continued Evelyn, " that my study of these creatures is either trifling or uninteresting."

" It will require all your wisdom to prove it otherwise," said Tremaine.

" Why, as to the interest," answered Evelyn, " they and their ancestors seem to have belonged, or rather to have gone on as faithful companions, to me and mine for these two hundred years; and the heart must be a little obdurate which is not something touched even by that circumstance alone. They seem to be a colony of kind dependents, who settle in the very precincts of my habitation, confiding in the protection which they think they are to meet with. Can I sally out and deprive them of what the mere smoke of my chimneys seemed to promise, when it indicated that it was the dwelling of a human being, and therefore of a friend?"

" Your ride has done wonders, indeed," said Tremaine. " It must have restored to you all your good-humour, when you can afford to bestow so much of it on a set of paltry birds."

" Some one has said," answered Evelyn, " (or if not, I will say it now for the first time,) that the nature of good-humour is such as to make it matter little what the subject of it is, for it always brings its reward along with it. But my rooks, Sir, are not to be despised, for they shew more intelligence (I am certain it is above instinct) than most, if not all other animals, except human; and occasionally, I verily believe, more than many of *them*."

* Swift. † Horace Walpole.

" The human animals are very much obliged to you," said Tremaine.

" But," gravely continued Evelyn, " is there in the whole range of zoology, next to our own great selves, any creatures who seem to possess so much design, such prescience in what they say and do?"

" Say!" exclaimed Tremaine.

" Yes, say! for we must not suppose that, at this moment, they are not in the midst of a debate. I only wish I were an Indian dervise, and could understand it."

Tremaine, notwithstanding Georgina had intimated her opinion, was about to appeal to her, when she stopped him by saying—

" You will get nothing out of us on this subject, Mr. Tremaine; I side with papa, as usual, and *de bon cœur* too, for I have often felt and watched all he is pointing out. I am particularly fond of their noise, which seems to tell so much; more even than the song of other birds, sweet as it is; and though the *ramage* of a modern shrubbery is certainly delicious, I almost prefer our ancient grove, with these its noisy inhabitants;—for such I suppose you will insist on calling them."

" But if you do," added Evelyn, " I shall continue, nevertheless, to respect these companions of our solitude, and must not have them insulted."

" You confess, then, you live in solitude," said Tremaine, catching at the word, " yet you had the choice of your life; why, therefore, blame me?"

" I live in the country," replied Evelyn, " but not in solitude."

" Yet you own you are driven to converse with these common creatures of the air, whom every farmer's boy hoots at all day long."

" I converse with Nature," said Evelyn, " whether in man or birds; you, it seems, only with man."

" I avow it," said Tremaine.

" And yet," replied Evelyn, " it is a comical way to converse with a gentleman, to run away from him."

" I think," said Tremaine, " if Miss Evelyn pleases, I would rather converse only with woman, at least to-day;

for your ride has put you into such bantering spirits, there is no getting you to be serious. Miss Evelyn and I agreed much better just now in the house when we were by ourselves."

"Mr. Tremaine was very agreeable," observed Georgina, "and read Lord Byron charmingly."

"I have no doubt of it," said Evelyn, looking at them both.

Strange! that a look should throw them both into a sort of consciousness incomprehensible to either.

"I know nothing," continued Evelyn, not perceiving it, "so much mistaken as that whole subject of solitude. Zimmerman ran mad about it first, and nothing would content him but making all other people as mad as himself*. The Swiss mountebank, Rousseau, too, endeavoured to turn people's heads on it, though he never turned his own: for when the world let him alone, he never could bear it. Be quite assured of this, that solitude, *as such*, as it is not natural, so it cannot be agreeable."

"Yet where is virtue so well preserved?" asked Tremaine.

"Say, rather, vice avoided," answered Evelyn, "for it is but a negative advantage at best."

"Do you admit Robinson Crusoe to be a natural picture?" said Tremaine.

"Perfectly, as all Defoe's are remarkable for being."

"He tells you that his soul never seemed so innocent or so enlightened."

"That was because Selkirk had no temptation to be otherwise, and had luckily been left with a Bible, which he had never before studied. But you will recollect that Selkirk was frightened at the animals about him, merely because they were not frightened at him; and when Robinson thought of none of his shipmates being saved, his perpetual cry was, 'Oh! that there had been but one.' Even his parrot repeating 'Poor Robin Crusoe,' was sweetness to his ear."

* He, however, corrected himself in a second volume, in which he shews the dangers of solitude sensibly enough.

"But," asked Georgina, "does Mr. Tremaine think solitude and a country life synonymous!"

"Nearly so," he said, "for what had boors about them to interest or amuse?"

"And yet," she observed—

"Some mute inglorious Milton—"

"Yes," he interrupted, "but he *is* 'mute and inglorious,' and therefore what am I the better for him?"

"Was ever a man so despotically unreasonable," exclaimed Evelyn; "you fly the Miltons you are angry with in town, and you are angry because you cannot find them in the country, yet even there you will not seek them. The heart is the same, however, every where, if you will but study it: seek, and ye will find the study even in a country village."

"I suppose," said Tremaine, drily, "that is the reason your worship attends Belford market; a thing I could not have believed, if my young friend here had not told it me."

"It only proves my sincerity in my creed," replied Evelyn, "and that I am not run away with by the cant about solitude because I live in the country. Human nature is there, as well as in a metropolis; and hence it is, I suppose, that a friend of yours and mine, who certainly never shuns the world, whenever he finds himself in a retired village, always asks, as the first question, which is the street*?"

"That is almost as bad," observed Tremaine, "as another friend of yours, of whom I have heard it related, 'that were he to choose his life for amusement, he would keep a public-house by the way-side.'"

"If you mean the author of the Moral and Political Philosophy†, it is perfectly true," said Evelyn; "yet who had a more perfect knowledge of human nature?—who more shrewd in his observations upon it?—who so conversant with all its secret springs and windings?

* Related of Mr. Jekyl. † Paley.

No, no, I want no apology for my supposed condescension in finding interest at a country market. In a word, my dear friend, if you are not happy in the capital, and seek the country for a cure, you will never cure yourself by living in that country as if it were a desert."

CHAPTER XXVII.

TRUE USES OF RETIREMENT.

Will you sit down with me? and we two will rail against our mistress, the world, and all our misery.

SHAKSPEARE.

I will chide no breather in the world but myself, against whom I know most faults.

SHAKSPEARE.

The party here rose from the bench, and bidding adieu to the loquacious, busy creatures that had first prompted the conversation, proceeded up the avenue to the house.

All were silent for a few minutes, when Tremaine, full of his subject, broke out, though in an under voice,—

> "And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
> Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in every thing."—

"Ah!" said the Doctor, "had the good Duke found no other occupation or interest, no other tongues, books, or sermons—in short, no other *good* than in the trees, brooks, and stones, he would soon have hung himself."

"Then what is it," said Tremaine, "that always makes those lovely scenes of the Forest of Ardennes so enchanting to every taste?"

"You, who are a poet, should be able to tell," replied Evelyn, "because it is lovely poetry. But I, who am a practical philosopher, demand something more for the

Duke, and, in truth, find it in the beautiful contrasts that fill this sweetest pastoral in the world.

"Your meaning?" asked Tremaine.

"Why what, after all, is the *action* of the story?" replied Evelyn. "What but the fate of the usurpation of his brother, the daily falling-off of the followers of the one, and the accession to those of the other, till the right was reclaimed. All this, it is true, was

Under the shade of melancholy boughs,

and is only the more beautiful for it; but still here were enterprise, action, and interest, as well as trees, brooks, and stones, mingled together in the most agreeable alternation of light and shade."

"Yet there is not a line or a word about what you call the action, that can be remembered," said Tremaine, "and Shakspeare himself scarcely mentions it."

"That was his skill," returned Evelyn; "his immediate object was pastoral, and there he and his reader revel together; we quaff it with delight; but the event of the fable is always on our minds, though secretly, and perhaps insensibly. Had Shakspeare propounded to himself nothing more than mere and absolute solitude, with no hope beyond it, it would have been absolutely vacuity."

"How comes it then," pursued Tremaine, "that all, even of the most illustrious rank, all that are eminent for powers and talents, as well as the most beautiful poets and the soundest philosophers, have all and alike concurred in the praises of retirement?"

"Praises, if you will," answered Evelyn, "but who *really* practised what he recommended? Horace, with all his charming rhapsodies about Lucretilis and the Sabine farm, and his

O rus! quando ego te aspiciam?—

was always sneaking to town, and then wrote to his steward that he was a very absurd fellow for not liking to stay in the country. As for your 'illustrious,' by which I suppose you mean ministers of state—"

"I do," said Tremaine.

"To them, as a recess from application, while the fatigue of it is upon them, no doubt retirement is heaven. But let their minds recover their tone, and how eager are they to get back."

"Nay, now surely you mistake," cried Tremaine, "for how many ministers have felt themselves most blest; nay, have thrown up their offices to enjoy seclusion?"

"Not one that I know of," said Evelyn, "though many have affected a readiness to do so; none more than your hero Bolingbroke, who makes me laugh sometimes in his otherwise admirable correspondence, to see, in the midst of his anxieties about Europe, an equally *expressed* anxiety to preserve bay-trees for his villa. Not indeed that this was either unnatural or foolish, were it not for the gross affectation tagged to the end of it."

"I do not recollect what you mean," said Tremaine.

"I think it is in a letter to Drummond," pursued Evelyn, "where he thanks him for these trees, and adds, 'I cannot plunge myself so far into the thoughts of public business, as to forget the quiet of a country retreat, whither I will go *some time or other*, *and am always ready to go at an hour's warning*.' Now, out upon such barefaced professions!"

"Why question their sincerity?" asked Tremaine.

"He might believe himself sincere," replied Evelyn, "but he was all the time cankered with ambition to the heart's core."

"I must not allow this," cried Tremaine, "of a man whose mind was only *too* elegant and philosophic; although so astonishingly able, that we cannot wonder the world had claims upon him."

"That I should forgive," returned Evelyn, "if it were not for this affectation, which even Swift laughed at as much as he dared."

"Swift laugh at Bolingbroke!"

"He at least tells Pope (whom my Lord had most charmingly gulled in more things than this), 'I have no

very strong faith in your pretenders to retirement; you have not gone through good or bad fortune enough to go into a corner and form conclusions *de contemptu mundi.*' So much, then, for your retired poet; but the best is, Bolingbroke returns the charge, and says both to Swift and Pope, 'If you despised the world as much as you pretend, you would not be so angry with it.' Thus this grand triumvirate imposed upon one another; praised and were unhappy in their retreat; growling at the world, yet not able to live out of it."

"Come, then," said Tremaine, "I will give you a minister, who, if any one did prefer philosophy in retirement to a silly ambition, was certainly the man."

"I long to know him," cried Evelyn.

"Sir William Temple!"

"He was most like it," observed Evelyn, "but I doubt whether even he comes up to your proof; for, from necessity, he was always called back before he had tried the experiment. As to the generality, a statesman flings up in a pet, and flies to solitude for relief; and for a little while he finds it."

"And why not for a great while?"

"Because it is relief only so long as he is under the stings of resentment, or while he thinks he is missed. When his disgust subsides, or he finds himself forgotten, he gets tired of venting reproaches to his trees on the ingratitude of the world, which reproaches the world does not care a farthing about."

"You are alluding to Walpole," said Tremaine.

"I am, and to his celebrated letter, supposed to prove a most philosophical love of retirement. 'My flatterers here,' says he, 'are all mutes. The oaks, the beeches, the chestnuts, seem to contend which best shall please the Lord of the Manor. They cannot deceive, they will not lie.' I quite agree with his biographer, Coxe, that this indicates the very hankering after the world, which he wished himself and the world to believe he was without*.'

* Upon this subject the reader will not fail to remember Horace Walpole's account of the retirement of that illustrious statesman

"I will not be bound," cried Tremaine, "by the example of expelled placemen, who, fixing their happiness on the smile of human beings like themselves, deserve all the mortification they get. D' Argenson, for example, who whined and sobbed in banishment, at Les Ormes*, or even Lord Chatham, who, when he quarrelled with the King, or his brother politicians, used to fly to Hayes, in the mere hope of being brought back again. Such ministers as these have little to do with real philosophy, and I refuse your authority."

the Duke of Newcastle. His Grace retired to Claremont, where, for about a fortnight, he played at being a country gentleman. Guns and green frocks were bought, and at past sixty he affected to turn sportsman; but, getting wet in his feet, he hurried back to London in a fright, and his country was once more blessed with his assistance.

* To a philosopher, or even a courtier, there is not a more useful lesson, or more interesting picture than this poor man exhibits, as drawn by Marmontel, relating merely what he saw and heard. "Oh! mes enfans," says he, "quelle maladie incurable que celle de l'ambition! quelle tristesse que celle de la vie d'un ministre disgracié! En me promenant avec lui dans ses jardins, j'apperçus de loin une statue de marbre; je lui demandai ce que c'étoit?"—"'C'est,' me dit-il, 'ce que je n'ai plus le courage de regarder;' et en nous détournant, 'Ah! Marmontel, si vous saviez de quel zèle je l'ai servi; si vous saviez combien de fois il m'avoit assuré que nous passerions nos vies ensemble, et que je n'avois pas un meilleur ami que lui! Voilà les promesses des rois! voilà leur amitié!' et en disant ces mots ses yeux se remplirent de larmes." He then (sad employment for his wounded spirit!) shewed Marmontel the pictures of various battles, in which he had stood on the same spot with the king, and in one of which, when he had reason to fear his son was killed, Louis had shewn him great sympathy. But oh, wretched change! "'Rien,' continued d'Argenson, 'rien de moi le touche plus!'" After this he fell with his head upon the bosom of his daughter-in-law, which he watered with his tears*. Distressing and degrading picture of human weakness under the prostrations of ill-regulated ambition; a slave to unworthy greatness! We blush for the Frenchman, and should for an Englishman under the same circumstances; only there is this difference between them, that the Englishman can only be displaced, not disgraced; for he can always fly to an opposition bench in parliament. I have been at Les Ormes, and saw these battle pieces, but did not then know what recollections they had prompted, more cruel to a disappointed *ambitieux* than the deaths they commemorated.

* Mém. Marmontel, tom. iii., p. 18.

"Let me give you ministers more to your taste," cried Evelyn.

"If you can," said Tremaine.

"Sir William Wyndham, the great Pulteney, and, lastly, the great Fox," replied the Doctor.

"Fox?" exclaimed Tremaine.

"Even so; for the *noctes cœnæque Atticæ* would not have been sought at St. Anne's Hill, with such apparent gust, had he not thought to mark his resentment against the House of Commons, who would not be swayed by him into a secession. The measure had been tried some sixty years before, by Sir William Wyndham, and laughed at."

"You are prejudiced," said Tremaine, "and cannot seriously think Mr. Fox did not love his retreat."

"That I do not say,*" returned Evelyn, "I only meant to shew that a patriot and a minister, whatever they may be called, are pretty much the same thing, and that the patriot man may fly off in a pet to solitude as well as the minister man. Both Mr. Fox and Lord Bath came back when they thought they should succeed, in the same manner as Lord Chatham and Lord Temple; nay, I question if Sir William Temple himself did not enjoy his Sheen and his Moor Park the more from the frequent calls that were made upon him to leave them.

"To pursue our subject," continued Evelyn, perceiving his friend was not disposed to reply: "one lover quarrels with his mistress; he flies to his country seat, and finds

* He would have been wrong if he had said it: for those who knew Mr. Fox best, knew how sincere were his enjoyments at St. Anne's Hill. Those who did not know him, may read Trotter's amusing account of him there for the proof. He was particularly fond of his geraniums, and used to boast of them to Lord Sidmouth, when speaker, and could always return to the subject of them with soothed interest, amidst the most violent storms of party rage. He had never been more furious than one day in haranguing in Palace Yard, on what was called the gagging bills. Half an hour afterwards he came to the house, reeking from the mob, and went up to the speaker, who expected some violent motion, to tell him how sorry he was that his geraniums (some cuttings of which he had promised him) had been blighted at St. Anne's Hill.—Ed.

pleasure in abusing her to the winds; another is happy in her affection, but some cruel papa interposes difficulties; he flies, too, in order the better to plan, in solitude, how to overcome the said difficulties, and meantime carves her name on the bark, and makes verses under the boughs, of all the trees in the neighbourhood. Both find relief for a time, because both are in fact engaged in their favourite occupation: but the *enragé* soon finds that his sulkiness is no revenge, and the *bien aimée*, that being idle will not please papa; so the solitude becomes irksome to both, and is gladly abandoned."

"Papa understands the thing at least," said Georgina, laughing; "I hope not by experience."

"Experience is the best mistress," replied Evelyn, "and I certainly recollect many a retirement to a house in a wood, in order to ascertain better than I thought I could from herself, whether your mother loved me or not. These solitudes were charming but short; I had others of a longer duration, and perhaps from better motives."

"I did not know you were such a disciple," said Tremaine.

"Oh yes," returned the Doctor. "I have often shut myself up."

"The occasion?" asked Tremaine.

"Why wisdom's self, you know,

> Oft seeks a sweet retired solitude,
> Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,
> She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
> That in the various bustle of resort
> Were all too ruffled, and sometime impair'd.

"But seriously, it was to recover the bent of my mind—I may even say of my virtue—when I had been sadly dissipated, as I too often was, and when ease, seriousness, books, and retired devotion became absolutely necessary for my purpose."

Georgina took her father's hand.

"An anchoret, I protest!" cried Tremaine; "had you lived in the fifth century we should have had you in the desert."

"Indeed you would not," returned Evelyn, "for having accomplished my purpose by restoring reflection, or by recovering the studies I was near upon losing (in exchange, perhaps, for an opera dance), I sighed again for a communication with my species; and, indeed, often felt thankful to join the supper conversation of the people with whom I lived."

"And who were they?" asked Tremaine.

"A mere woodman and his wife," said Evelyn, "whose lodge was a mile distant from all other habitations, except of rabbits and tame pheasants, and whose cheerful children were not unfrequently an acceptable diversion to a man, who, with all his resources, was growing tired of himself."

"I have heard, indeed," said Tremaine, "of being 'as melancholy as a lodge in a warren,' but knew not how practically true the simile was. Yet you did this often?"

"I did, and may venture to say I was always the better for it. Many, at least, are the subjects I examined, both in literature and morals, in these temporary retreats; and the woodman's house was to me always—

Mihi me reddentis agelli.

"Your picture is at least pretty," said Tremaine, "and I only wonder your secession from the world was not of longer continuance."

"There was no occasion for it," returned Evelyn, "for I was not under any great disgust, like Timon; nor had I had a disappointment to madness, like Camillo; nor was I under the influence of religious melancholy, like Jerome. I simply wished to think, and to examine myself at leisure—which I could not do in a crowd; and, when I had done this, I returned to the world."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

WILL WIMBLE.

Win us with honest trifles.

SHAKSPEARE.

As the party returned to the house, the Doctor asked Georgina if Will Wimble was not to dine with them; which she answered in the affirmative.

"And who is Will Wimble?" inquired Tremaine.

"A sort of pet of mine," answered Evelyn, "whom you once well knew, though you have forgotten him now. Many's the time, he says, he has played at leap-frog with you at your first school."

"I have not the honour of making out who he can be," replied Tremaine.

"Perhaps not," said the Doctor, "for Wimble is a name I have given him; his godfathers and godmothers christened him John, his friends call him Jack, and his surname is Careless. He descends from that Colonel Careless who passed those pleasant hours with his prince in the oak, after the battle of Worcester: the only thing he's proud of in that way; though he piques himself on making the best fly for a trout, breaking the best pointer, and turning the best rosin box in all the county. 'Tis hence I call him Will Wimble."

"I suppose, too," said Tremaine, sarcastically, "he is as polite as his namesake, and waits at every stile till you come up, for fear you should think there are no manners in the country."

"Not at all unlikely," answered the Doctor, "for he is not very quiescent under any supposed superiority of the town, in that, or indeed in any respect, and is, in fact, in most of his feelings, not only a John Bull, but complete Yorkshire to boot."

"I now recollect him," said Tremaine; "but I thought the breed of such worthy gentlemen was utterly extinct."

"Not altogether," replied Evelyn, "though I do not suppose our political philosophers of the present day would take any great pains to preserve it—seeing that he, as an individual of the species, certainly does not contribute much to the *wealth* of nations. And, in fact, I do not recommend the idleness of his life as an example to be followed. He is a man of nature, however, in his way, and so much of a philosopher, that his garden is of far greater consequence to him than his money. He once lost a hundred pounds (all he had saved of his own in the world) by the failure of a neighbouring bank. That morning I received a letter from him, beginning with how sorry I should be to hear of his misfortune. Both Georgy and I were indeed sincerely concerned at what we had before heard; but on reading farther, we found not a word about the hundred pounds, but a great many lamentations that a violent hail-storm had broken down the finest shew of balsams he had ever had, which would certainly have won the prize at the next florists' feast. But he never could bear what are called worldly cares to interfere with him, and once sacrificed even his hopes of fortune to his love of liberty."

"I honour him for that, at least," said Tremaine; "but what is this last story?"

"He had a cousin, a merchant at Liverpool, who offered to take him into partnership, provided he would apply to business. He gave a reluctant consent; his place was taken in the coach, and the hour of departure approached; when, going to take a last glimpse of a brook that ran at the bottom of his garden, in which he had caught many a trout, it looked so beautiful, and warbled so invitingly, that he could not stir. In short, he let the coach go without him, passed the whole day by the side of the stream, and wrote a civil letter to his cousin declining his offer."

"And did he not repent?" asked Tremaine.

"Sometimes," continued Evelyn, "when he has wanted money, generally for some benevolent purpose or other: for his brother always supplies him with a good horse; the only great expense he has. In all other points of

view, as an innocent and honourable character, always the most cheerful creature in the world, always carrying his cheerfulness into society, and ever on the watch to do a good turn, I know not a worthier man or more welcome guest."

Tremaine pondered these words, and observing the speaking countenance of Georgina approve every thing her father had said, certain thoughts darted into his mind.

After a pace or two, which brought them to the hall-door :—

"And how old may this worthy be?" asked Tremaine.

"I have told you about your standing," said the Doctor.

"He is the best creature in the world," said Georgina.

"He is at least a happy one in such favour," observed Tremaine; "and if it were not for his age—"

"Oh! that is nothing," replied Georgina, understanding him, "for I've been married to him a long while already; ever since I was five years old."

This speech cut both ways, and it both pained and pleased Tremaine accordingly, though each almost without his knowing it, and certainly without his knowing why. At all events, he felt more grave than he had done during any previous part of the conversation; when the bell ringing loud, "I dare say that's he," she continued, "and like a good wife I ought to go to meet him."

"You forget," said her father, "that he never does me the honour of ringing the bell, but rides straight to the stable-door, and puts his horse up himself."

"True," said Georgina; "who can it be?"

A servant announced a neighbouring nobleman, in the person of Lord St. Clair.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A VISCOUNT.

If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work.

SHAKSPEARE.

Lord St. Clair was a viscount of considerable estate, and by the mother's side related to Evelyn. He was well enough disposed, but spoiled in the bringing up; to which the early loss of his father and a too indulgent mother had much contributed. He *had been* a traveller, a politician, a speaker, and a violent party-man; and, on coming to his estate, he too had built him a house, and *had been* very happy. But, the house finished, he had fled back to London, which had exhausted its pleasures upon him; so that from mere satiety he felt miserable. He was not indeed one of those who philosophized on the general miseries of the world; from which he had not the least thought of retiring. But he was not the lowest in the rank of listlessness: and though he had neither Tremaine's attainments, nor his fastidiousness, yet he was fully as great a burthen to himself; with this especial difference, that he was very willing to cast that burthen upon any one who would receive it.

He had sufficient sense to have a great respect for Evelyn, and susceptibility enough left to be struck with his daughter,—to whom indeed the neighbourhood had sometimes assigned him, as they would any one else whose estates had bordered so closely upon her father's.

As Tremaine knew him in the world, and was also his neighbour in the country, he could not exactly obey his first impulse, which was to take his leave; and the Viscount, yawning out a compliment, said he did not know he was in Yorkshire.

Evelyn (who was not sorry at an opportunity to play off one *ennuyé* against the other, with the hope of

benefiting both) observed that it was no wonder, for Mr. Tremaine was so great a recluse that he scarcely condescended to visit his neighbours.

"You forget I have been ill," said Tremaine, not much liking the topics to which this might lead.

"That is the very reason," pursued the Viscount, "that you should visit every body. For my part, well or ill, I think to be by one's-self is the greatest bore in nature; and I therefore make a point of seeing all the world. Had I known you were here, I should certainly have beat up your quarters."

"I am exceedingly obliged to you," said Tremaine.

"Not much," replied St. Clair; for I assure you I am so intolerably dull at home, that I'm glad to bestow myself on any body."

Tremaine bowed his thanks again.

"I believe," continued Lord St. Clair, "I must take my mother's advice after all, and marry; if any lady will have pity upon me," added he, looking at Miss Evelyn.

"He wanted a wife to make him unaisy,"

said the Doctor, laughing.

"Upon my soul I believe you've hit it," observed St. Clair, "for I'm so plaguy easy from morning till night, that I absolutely don't know what to do with myself; if I could but be a little *un*easy, there's no knowing how I might feel after it."

"The ladies are at least obliged to you," said Georgina.

"Have you no books, no studies?" asked Tremaine.

"For books, thousands; but I'm glutted with them, and have resolved to leave them to wiser people; such as my good friend here, who is always so kind as to tell me all I want to know."

"Why don't you go to London?" asked Tremaine.

"My good Sir, why don't you?"

Tremaine reddened at the equality in their situations, which this seemed to imply.

"To tell you the truth," continued the Viscount, "I have been there these four months, but grew so sick of

suppers, and fêtes, and heroes, and my eyes were so dazzled with dancing and diamonds, feathers and emperors, that I thought a little solitude might be a good thing."

"And did you not find it so?" asked Evelyn, with affected gravity.

"Why not exactly," answered St. Clair; "particularly as every thing was going on wrong at Mount St. Clair. I am ruined by my plantations, by which I had intended to make a fortune. By the way," continued he, looking out "how do the cedars you planted two years agocome on?"

"Look," said the Doctor, throwing up the sash, "they flourish now as I could wish; yet they have cost me much pains; and these two, the very best, as well as best placed among them, actually lost their leaders in the winter."

The Viscount, half excited, bent through the window to look at them, and observing they had acquired others, asked the meaning of a sort of bandage, which the top of each exhibited.

This was nothing but a very simple contrivance of a soft bit of wood, fashioned like a cradle, and bound with bass to the stem of the old leaders, so as gently to elevate a new shoot in the same perpendicular line. It had perfectly succeeded, and the new leader had already pushed at least a foot.

St. Clair, who *had been* fond of planting, actually went out to examine it, and, turning, observed,

"I am surely very unfortunate: I have more hands than you, and my soil is at least as good; but though I'm known to be fond of this tree, and spare no expence in its cultivation, I have not one about the house equal to those of your's, notwithstanding their accident."

"Because you don't take the pains to attend to them with your own hands."

"Why, no," said St. Clair, "for a man of any fashion to be cutting sticks like a carpenter, of whom sixpence might have purchased the trouble, would be neither profitable nor honourable."

"I beg your pardon," replied the Doctor, persevering 'it might be both."

"As to the latter, if you had *invented* the thing (a mode of preserving a tree to posterity), I question if that would not have been honourable; and for the profit, you might have preserved your trees, which trees you have lost, and your good-humour at the same time."

"True," said Clair, yawning, "if such a trifle, so much in every one's power, can put one in good-humour!"

"You would at least," pursued Evelyn, "not have found as you told us just now, that to be by one's-self was the greatest bore in nature. In truth, as Mr. Tremaine and I often agree, we are all of us made for labour of some sort or other, and if we cannot meet it, we must make it."

"Tremaine say he would make labour?" cried St. Clair, staring.

Tremaine bowed to the Doctor, but not in acquiescence. It was a bow not be made out by every body, and certainly not by the young Peer; yet it said almost as much as Lord Burleigh's shake of the head, if rightly understood; for it told Evelyn he was in his power, as he did did not choose to take the trouble to contradict him.

"To make labour is the last thing *I* should wish to do," continued the Viscount, "even for an hour."

"Perhaps so," replied Evelyn; "but give me leave to ask how that hour would have been otherwise employed?"

"Probably in riding," said St. Clair, "or, if in bad weather, at billiards."

"Very good," said Evelyn, "riding is a fine exercise, especially if in a fine air, and in the early morning."

"Early morning!" exclaimed St. Clair: "at least our friend here is not with you in that."

"Oh; but he is," pursued Evelyn: and Georgina laughing, Tremaine gave visible signs of uneasiness, if not of impatience."

"Then as to billiards," continued Evelyn, "it is a pleasant relaxation after the mind has been particularly bent with study."

"I believe," said St. Clair, "you're quizzing me, for I own to you I'm tired both of the one and the other.

I've seen all the rides in the neighbourhood till I'm sick of them; and as to billiards, unless with a new player, I've played so much, that they have no longer any charm."

"Confess, then," replied Evelyn, "that to have employed yourself in protecting your trees, would have proved as agreeable an occupation as any of those that actually did employ you."

"All that, my dear Sir, is very true," said the Viscount, looking at his watch, "but as I find the country has still less interest in it than London, it is a still greater bore, you know; so I shall return to the dull delights of the Park and St. James's Street, the day after to-morrow."

"And back again next month," said Evelyn, as he attended him to the hall, "*vous ennuyer à la campagne.*"

"I am charmingly off for neighbours," continued the Doctor, re-entering the library; "one of my nearest comes two hundred miles, to a house he built himself, and stays a week; and my nearest of all, when he does chance to reside at the seat of his ancestors, shuts himself up as he if was one of the old family pictures."

"You scold us pretty well for it, however," said Tremaine; "not a stroke to my lord there, but I felt in every bone of my own skin."

"I'm glad what was so well meant was so well taken," replied Evelyn; "but how do you like the Viscount?"

"It is rdiculous to think what a reputation he once had."

"Respect him, however," said Evelyn; "for he is one of the quizzers, one of the redoubtable corps of St. James's Street, whom all his Majesty's plain subjects are afraid of."

"I wonder why," said Georgina.

"Ask Mr. Tremaine," replied the Doctor.

CHAPTER XXX.

YORKSHIRE.

I would I was as sure of a good dinner.
SHAKSPEARE.

TREMAINE's reply (if he had one) to the question propounded at the close of our last chapter, was spared by the appearance of a man crossing the lawn, in a single-breasted coat and long gaiters. He came from the stables, and was followed by all Evelyn's dogs, who seemed eager for his notice, and all of whom he did notice by their names.

"Hilloa, ho!" cried Evelyn, putting his head out of window while Tremaine was astonished both at his hilarity and familiarity with the stranger; whom, however, he rightly judged to be Careless, and who was about to return a sort of view halloo, when he was stopped by Georgina. She had hastily gone out to meet him, and, putting her arm within his, carried him immediately off into a walk at a short distance, where they seemed in earnest conversation.

Something like jealousy actually struck Tremaine on seeing this; and he could not help exclaiming, in a tone between surprise, envy, and disapprobation, "This Will Wimble is a happy man, Dr. Evelyn!"

"Why yes," observed the Doctor, "if being just the best-natured creature in the world can make a man happy, he is so."

"I mean," said Tremaine, broodingly, "in the favour he seems to enjoy, and the influence he seems to be allowed in this family. It is not only the dogs that court him, and the master that loves him, but the master's daughter—"

"Loves him too," finished the Doctor; "and well she

may, for I much question if he has not been a sixty miles' ride to serve her, in a point on which her heart was much set."

Tremaine looked more than surprised: "her heart!" exclaimed he.

"Yes," answered the Doctor, "and he is now, I perceive, giving an account of his commission."

"Is it fair to ask what commission?" said Tremaine, with a strange sort of anxiety.

"Why neither more nor less than this," replied Evelyn: "an old widow, whom she loves very much, sent us word two days ago, that her only son had been pressed at Hull, though no seafaring man, and that she was fearful he might enter, which would break her heart. I was not at home, nor expected for some hours, and perhaps should have been too flinty myself to have gone so far to save an idle rogue. What does Miss Evelyn but send to Bachelor's Hall for her humble servant there, who came over in a trice, takes her instructions, rides to Hull, five-and-twenty-miles, thence to the widow's, ten miles farther, with this cub of a son, whom he had got released; and, having delivered him to his mother, is now come back to relate the result."

Tremaine's heart beat high—it filled both towards Careless and Georgina.—His jealousy, if an unintelligible sensation of interest can be called so, was by no means cured; yet he had the generosity to feel the greatest admiration for Careless's active kindness, and, for the first time in his life, found there was an object whom he thought he might envy.

And yet he wondered at himself for doing so; for Careless, being now come back, and presented to him, the man of refinement, in his distant bow and dignified air, could not help drawing a comparison between himself and the homely plainness of the little 'Squire, not at all to the advantage of the latter.

In truth, the elegance of Tremaine's manner had always, from the first, struck Georgina herself; and the superiority of his *abord*, over even one she so highly

valued as Careless, was now particularly conspicuous to eyes which were always alive to whatever was stampt with the mark of gentleman.

This discernment and sensibility to ease and grace, so natural to all bosoms of feeling, could not but make her properly appreciate whatever belonged to the *air noble;* and whenever she saw Tremaine, and thought of his acquirements of mind, set off by the ease of his conversation and the polish of this advantageous manner, though a country girl, her own nature was responsive to it, and the disparity of their years did not prevent her from thinking him, not only the finest gentleman, but the most interesting person she had ever seen.

Careless, on the contrary, who had round shoulders, and a slouch in his air, contracted by being almost always in the saddle, had, in mere personal appearance, nothing but the jollity of his countenance to recommend him; and though this latter spoke the highest good-nature, it must be owned it was not remarkable for any particular intelligence.

"I find," said Tremaine, shaking hands with his new friend, "I had the pleasure of being at school with you before I went to Eton, and I now recollect the same good-natured features which were once (we won't say how long ago) familiar to me."

"You fine town gentlemen," observed Careless, making him a country bow, "are ashamed of your ages sometimes; but us plain Yorkshires wear well enough not to need disguising them."

Tremaine reddened (which Careless not perceiving, he added kindly), "I'm sorry, however, to see you don't look in health, and fear this always comes of running away from home: I heard you had passed many years in foreign parts."

"Yet I have been home these four years," said Tremaine.

"But not in Yorkshire," observed Careless, looking significantly at Evelyn.

"Don't mind him," said the Doctor, "for with *his*

good-will, no man would ever go beyond Bawtry, and scarcely into the Bishoprick *."

"Why," answered Careless, "I see no reason, when a man is well, that he should wish to be better, at the hazard (ten to one) of being a great deal worse. I have now lived, man and boy, seven-and-thirty years in Yorkshire, have been but twice in London in my life, and never across the salt seas, as they say; and yet, I believe, I am as happy and content as any that have."

"Excellent philosophy," said Tremaine.

"No philosophy at all," replied Careless, "but mere taste, that was born with me,—like that for Dr. Evelyn's beef, which I perceive," added he (snuffing the air rather eagerly), "is putting upon the table."

A servant announcing it, a contest arose which should give his arm to Georgina; and Careless, observing that though he knew it was not his place to go before Tremaine, yet when a lady was concerned he could never yield, Tremaine instantly drew back, not without a glance from the lady as she went out of the room.

Evelyn, who observed it, and loved a quotation (as the reader perhaps by this time has discovered), exclaimed, as he hurried Tremaine into the dining-room,

> While a kind glance at her pursuer flies;
> How much at variance are her feet and eyes!

Tremaine seemed not ill pleased at the application, and drawing a chair, this small party of friends were soon seated at their repast.

"I fear," said Evelyn, as he was doing the honours, "I shall be like other half-wise people, who pursue half measures, and fail in their objects. Here we are, dining at past five."

"Nearer six," cried Careless, with some eagerness, contemplating his plate, that was just filled.

"And yet," continued Evelyn, "I am too soon for Mr. Tremaine, by two or three hours at least; I know

* The county of Durham, always called by the true indigenous neighbourhood the Bishoprick.

I am too late for my friend here, and certainly for myself; and thus I have pleased nobody."

Tremaine expressed his regret that the hour should be altered for him; observing, with politeness, "he was sure he could dine at five as well as at eight."

"So am I too," said the Doctor, significantly, "if you would but try; and at best it is but a little agreeable violence."

"At eight!"—exclaimed Careless, with surprise; "that beats all I ever heard. I thought we were getting wrong, even in Yorkshire, when we got beyond four. But this comes of leaving the good old country, and training after outlandish customs."

"For once your patriotism is mistaken," said Tremaine, "for on the Continent, I believe, to have got up to three is quite extraordinary, and they generally keep constant to two, if not to one."

"So much the worse for England," remarked Careless, gravely, "and I almost wonder how we can have beaten the French as we have; I never thought they could be so much more natural than us."

"I dare say," said Evelyn, consolingly, "Lord Wellington's army all dined at one."

"That alters the case," replied Careless.

"May I ask, in all humility," said Tremaine, who did not like his hours, any more than anything else, to be criticised, "what time the good old country would allow us to dine?"

"If you had not told me of these Mounseers' example," answered Careless, who abhorred France so sincerely as to hate them more than even waiting for his dinner, "I should say one, or at most two. Our fathers, who were better than us, always did so. And let me tell you, when one has been after the dogs, or busy all day, a good sirloin" (putting in his plate) "is better at two or three o'clock, than all the kickshaws in the world, though you waited till nine for them."

"A palpable hit," observed the Doctor, laughing.

Georgina, too, smiled; and though she had too much natural good breeding to apologise for her dinner, she

could not help saying something about a wish for a French cook, for Mr. Tremaine's sake.

"And why so?" asked her father.

"Why indeed?" echoed Careless, "I'm sure you are not true Yorkshire, to wish for any such thing."

"Mr. Tremaine," answered Georgina, "has accustomed himself to particular things, which I am afraid he cannot do without."

"The lady is my best friend, I am glad to perceive," said Tremaine: "for, as to my two old schoolfellows here, I begin to believe they are in a plot, and have invited me to dinner, merely to laugh at me."

"Like the fox and the stork in the fable," observed Careless, as if he had made another hit.

"I will have my revenge, however, like the stork;" continued Tremaine, good humouredly; "for when Mr. Careless does me the honour to dine with me, at Woodington, he shall have nothing but kickshaws."

"That's not the way I have been used to be treated at Woodington," rejoined Careless; "nor did I ever see there, what I never thought I should have lived to see at Lord Bellenden's, as I did t'other day."

This he uttered with a loud and long-drawn sigh.

"Pray what?" asked Tremaine.

"A round of beef sent to the side-board," added Careless.

"Monstrous!" remarked the Doctor.

"It will lose his brother the county," said Careless, seriously.

Tremaine stared, and remarked, "that the county must be little worth having, if it depended upon that."

"Why, what should it depend upon?" replied Careless.

"I should have thought," remarked Tremaine, drawing up, "upon integrity of character, sound principles of patriotism, and extensive connexions."

"Why true," answered Careless; "but principles are best seen, I always think, in manners and customs: and if a person departs from the *customs* of his ancestors, how do I know that he has not lost their *principles* too?"

He said this with the air of a man confident in the

strength of his position, so that it could not be answered. Indeed, to own the truth, it was not new; for he had made the same observation once or twice before, with considerable success, at the Hound-and-Horn club, a respectable and neighbourly meeting, which was held once a month at the little market-town of Belford, and which was sedulously attended by Careless, the vicar, and surgeon of the place, not to mention one or two 'squires of much larger fortune, and sometimes (perhaps once in each half-year) by Evelyn himself.

The dinner removed, a serious difficulty arose; for the good host vowed he had no claret in his cellar, and he knew Tremaine could not or would not drink port. Tremaine observed, on being pushed upon it, that it was not his taste, but his constitution, that felt the want of it.

"Suppose we try but this once," said the Doctor; "it is only diminishing the quantity in proportion to the strength, and my port is excellent."

"The best in the county," quoth Careless, holding it to the light, with the air of a connoisseur.

Tremaine was obliged to comply; when Careless added, "'twill keep the wind off your stomach, which I shrewdly suspect is the cause of all your complaints."

His refined schoolfellow seemed a little hurt, and perceiving that Georgina was rather amused than shocked, began to meditate internally upon the impossibility, after all, of a country education sufficing to the finishing polish of female manners.

"At least you will allow it is sound," said the Doctor.

"It is remarkably good of its kind," answered Tremaine.

"And the palate?"

"Rougher than claret," said the guest, "but not so unpleasant as might be expected."

"I will hope, then," added his friend, "my unlucky want of French wine may be borne with."

"My father," exclaimed Careless, "used to say that he was no honest man that did not like port."

"Your grandfather," replied Tremaine, "would have said the same by ale."

The port, however, was extremely good, and the weak stomach of Tremaine having condescended to a very plain dinner, its master almost wondered at his own feelings of lightness and good-humour. Pleased in himself, he was pleased with his companions; the worth which he had heard of in Careless, always bore him up in his estimation, when his bluntness was ready to sink him down; and the good sense of Evelyn, together with the beauty and intelligence of his daughter, were never more conspicuous.

After coffee, Georgina gave them music; and the evening being delicious, the whole party strolled with Tremaine half the way home,—his horses attending him till they took leave.

The moon shone bright when he mounted, and so unusually pleasing were his meditations, that though he moved at a foot's pace, he wished the way had been longer.

Reader! wast thou ever in love?

CHAPTER XXXI.

A YOUNGER BROTHER.

Home-keeping youths have ever homely wits.

SHAKSPEARE.

"An important question that, with which you concluded the last chapter."

'Tis therefore I concluded, for surely to answer it requires a chapter by itself. And yet much will depend upon the life, character, and education, to say nothing of the sex of the person, who may be at this moment honouring this essay——

"Essay? surely, Sir, it begins to be a novel!—"

"By no means! and I will maintain it before any bishop, professor, or critic in Christendom, that it still is

that treatise of moral philosophy I intended when I set out. I am to relate facts, and if love be a subject of moral philosophy, how can I help it?"

I repeat then (without disrobing myself), Reader, wast thou ever in love? Because, if thou wast, thou wilt call up many a pleasing recollection when thou figurest to thyself Tremaine, *pensieroso,* returning home, now plunging into woods

Of branching elm, star-proof,

now emerging into clear moonlight, and now stopping his horse on the bank of the river that divided him from Evelyn Hall, and fixing a lingering look upon its distant pediments; for no other reason, that this history has ever discovered, than because they contained an amiable young person, and a respectable friend, who had made the last few hours pleasant to him.

Dismounting, he delivered his horse to his groom, and saying he would walk the rest of the way, dismissed him.

"*Que diable signifie tout cela?*" said Monsieur Dupuis, when he rushed into the hall on the trampling of horses, and heard from the groom that his master was pacing home on foot.

"*Que c'est un drôle ce gaillard-là!*" continued Monsieur Dupuis.

The groom understood, and Monsieur Dupuis meant him to understand, nothing of his exclamation; but betaking himself to the housekeeper's room, "My master no come home; he walk about to watch de moonlight," said the valet.

"Very extraordinary this," said Mrs. Watson; "what can possibly have happened?"

Except, however, in the pleasure, Tremaine did not think it extraordinary at all. There was a calm in the air agreeable to his senses, and an interest in his thoughts which he had not felt for years; and having spent the best part of an hour on the terrace, he retired to rest, with an equanimity surprising to himself, and particularly surprising to M. Dupuis.

What is more, though he rang early the next morning, it was because he had been sufficiently refreshed with sleep; which, without his being able to account for it, had been sweeter than he had for a long time known.

"I suppose I am recovering," said he, as he opened his windows earlier than usual: "this air is delicious, and I have none of that feverishness which used to hang upon me."

As soon as he was dressed, it was observed that he went instantly to his library, where he culled out a volume of Marmontel's Memoirs, and actually, before breakfast, made the following extract with his own hand:

"Jusque là, le plaisir des sens avoit été le seul attrait qui m'eut conduit. Ici je me sentis enlevé hors de moi par de plus invincibles charmes; c'étoient la candeur, l'innocence, la douce sensibilité, la chaste et timide pudeur, une honnêteté dont le voile ornoit la grace et la beauté; c'étoit la vertu couronnée des fleurs de la jeunesse, qui ravissoit mon âme encore plus que mes yeux; sorte d'enchantement mille fois au-dessus de tous ceux des Armides que j'avois cru voir dans le monde."

The reader knows, or, if not, I am bound to tell him, that this beautiful description was of a young girl of eighteen, whom Marmontel married with all her bloom upon her, and with whom he was as happy as the day was long.

"And why should he not?" asks some young reader of the gentler sex. Merely, young lady, because the Frenchman was fifty-four years old. "That makes a sad difference," says the young lady! Oh! but he was a Frenchman!

To be sure that alters the case again. At the same time it led Tremaine into a profound calculation, as to the true rule of proportion between the animal spirits, gaiety, and powers of pleasing, of persons born on this, or that side of the Channel.

"As a Frenchman to an Englishman, in these respects," said Tremaine, doubling down the book, while he took a stride along the room, — "so, in inverse ratio, is thirty-eight to fifty-four." Nothing in the world could be

clearer. And as Marmontel gained Mademoiselie de Montigny and was happy, so ———"

Did he finish the calculation?

Not exactly; for as he pondered upon it in one of the windows, his eye was arrested by a gentleman well mounted, who leaped a five-barred gate into a field that bounded the lawn, and seemed to be galloping up to the house. It was Careless, who in a trice entered the room, and said he was come to breakfast with him. Tremaine received him with more than politeness, and, ordering breakfast, asked him what he preferred.

"I myself drink chocolate," said he, "and can recommend it to you as the right Spanish."

"I would rather it were English," cried Jack, "and think Sir Hans Sloane's no bad thing; however, I trust, whatever it be, that the proper staple of an old Yorkshire breakfast is to be the foundation."

Tremaine looked inquiringly.

"I am sorry you don't understand me," said Careless, "for I mean cold beef, or good pigeon-pie."

Tremaine, having given the necessary orders, asked if he usually hunted in July, and made flying leaps before breakfast?

"Why no!" he said, "but the ground was in such good order, and Lightfoot in such spirits, that I thought I would indulge him, poor brute! and, besides, I like to keep him in practice."

Tremaine then inquired if he had come from home; but found he had slept at Evelyn Hall; a thing he frequently did, particularly if bound to another part of the county: "As I am now," continued Jack; "for I have promised Lord Bellenden's youngest son to shew him how to make a May-fly, as well as wire a pike; two things of which, with all his Greek and Latin, he is totally ignorant."

"It is fifteen miles to Lord Bellenden's," said Tremaine, "and you have come two already; you must be good-nature itself to go so far, to teach a young cub to throw his line."

"I have a great regard for his father and mother,"

replied Careless; "they wish him to be a little accomplished, and I don't mind my time for people I esteem."

"That is very good of you," replied Tremaine, sitting down with him to breakfast, "and as you have so much of it to dispose of, your neighbours must profit by your disposing of it so well. I think Dr. Evelyn said you were of no profession."

"That's my own fault," answered Careless; "my father wanted me to study the law; but after reading Tom Jones, and seeing old Piepoudre the attorney hanged for forging a will, I sickened of it."

"Good," said Tremaine, rather amused.

"My mother," continued his guest, "then proposed the church; a good pious woman she was, and I was not much averse; but ——"

"You saw no clergyman hanged, I hope!" said Tremaine.

"No!" rejoined Careless, "but I had doubts and qualms about myself."

"I dare say," interrupted Tremaine in a pause which Jack made — "doubts which have puzzled many a wise man before us."

"I had no puzzle about it," answered Jack; "and perhaps you will laugh at me when I tell you what my doubts and qualms were."

Tremaine assured him he never could be so rude.

"Why then," suspending a piece of cold beef on his fork and knitting his brow, as if he was still pondering the matter—"I did not think myself good enough," said Careless.

"Was that your reason?" asked Tremaine, with some surprise.

"No other, I assure you," answered his companion, "for I found I was too light, not to say wicked; and I said, how can I preach if I don't practise? As to what I was to preach, I had no doubt, for it seems to me all a very plain thing."

"You are a happy man, Mr. Careless," said Tremaine, gravely.

"If you mean for believing the Testament," replied Careless, "I see nothing but what is good in it, and I never could bear a man who made it a joke. But as I was afraid I never could come up to it, seeing I was hankering after a thousand other things, I gave up the matter, and so here I am."

The train of thought which this caused in Tremaine, together with the interruption it had given to Jack's breakfast, produced on both sides a silence of several minutes, which Tremaine broke by reverting to his first observation.

"Well, but this time of yours! I should like to get a lesson from you how to dispose of it; having a little of my own upon my hands now and then."

This was more than he had ever acknowledged, even to himself. Had Evelyn been his guest instead of Careless, he never would have made the concession. Forbid it, pride! forbid it, philosophy! forbid it, romance! forbid it all and every flight of fancy that ever took possession of, and misled the brain and heart of poor human nature! But it was different with a man who seemed a mere piece of good-natured simplicity, if not, as Tremaine then supposed, a mere Yorkshire Tike, with whom he and his philosophy could run no risk. He therefore hazarded the disclosure, assuring his own mind that he did it merely to draw Careless out into an account of himself. Be this as it may, the observation was made.

"Why, to tell you the truth," answered Careless, rather abruptly, "from what I heard of your goings on, I thought this life of yours must be a damn'd dull un."

Tremaine was thunderstruck; though he has since declared, it was not the abruptness of the attack that hurt him, but the rank Yorkshire twang in which the words were uttered, that grated his ear still more than his feelings.

Could he have suspected any body in the country of the liberty of quizzing, or suspected Careless anywhere, the offence had been unpardonable. And let me tell

you, no wonder; for how would any one, who had for years been nursing himself in a favourite system, that was, like Sancho's idea of sleep, to cover him all over like a cloak, in all weathers, and shield him from hail, rain, and snow, thunder and lightning, and all the storms that can burst upon the head of a poor mortal man,—how, Sir, I say, would you yourself like to have such a comfortable, warm, and sheltering cloak stripped off your back in a trice, and that without saying with your leave or by your leave, by a plain blunt man, who, without any cloak at all, rode bare-headed in all weathers, and therefore did not understand the use of one? Flesh and blood could not bear it.

Still there was something about Tremaine's testiness, however sudden and rash, which never made him forget anything good that belonged to the agent that had caused it. His resentment was short-lived, and generally yielded to the recollection of something favourable in the character of its object.

At that moment, although he drew up and reddened, and was really shocked at the *brusquerie* of his guest, yet seeing him perfectly unconscious, and therefore innocent, the recollection of his long ride to the widow's with her son came across him, and swallowing with his chocolate some strong words that had got up to the top of his throat, he took a middle course, and observed, though with dryness—

"You, Mr. Careless, are, I suppose, never dull; and to be sure, in the life you lead, must be continually amused. Nay! I think I heard you yesterday say something about *business*."

"Why, yes!" returned Jack, "though I'm of no trade, I am somehow always employed, and no day's too long for me."

Tremaine, with a superior air, said, he should like to have the history of his day.

"Why, to begin, then," rejoined the guest, "I rise mostly with the sun."

"At four o'clock in the morning!" observed Tremaine.

"Not exactly, but at six, unless it's dark:—and if it doesn't rain cats and dogs, I generally, the first thing, go to see what sort of a morning it is out of doors."

"Your second?" asked Tremaine.

"See my horse rubbed down," returned Jack.

Tremaine's looks indicated a contempt, which his politeness alone restrained.

"I see very well what you mean," said Careless; "you think that beneath me. But I am only a younger brother, and have but a boy, who might, if I did not look to it, spoil the best horse in the world, and almost my only happiness. But if I had ever so many grooms, I should do the same, for I love my horse as much——"

"As Sancho did his ass," interrupted Tremaine.

"And good reason he had," rejoined Careless, not at all disconcerted; "I have read that book many's the time, and I don't know anything in it more pleasant than the friendship between Sancho and Dapple. If it was so between human creatures, we should all be the better for it;—it seems so reasonable," continued Jack.

"One must be very much in want of a friend," said Tremaine, "to bestow so much affection on one's horse!"

"Where can you get a better?" asked Jack, warming in praise of his horse. "Give me leave to ask where will you get one that is always ready at all calls, will lend you his back in all weathers, and for all burthens; will give you health and pleasure, do business for you, fight for you, and save your life for you?" said Careless.

"Save your life?" exclaimed Tremaine.

"Yes!" answered the orator of the horse; "I could shew you such brave things done by horses, in battle, and among the Tartars."

"Where!" cried Tremaine.

"In the Gentleman's Recreation," answered Careless.

"Pray go on," said the host, much amused.

"What wonder, then," continued Jack, "if I, who am a lone man to boot, and have few things to love me, as the beggar said of his dog—"

Tremaine gave a sort of sigh.

"What wonder, I say, if I myself delight in being good to a dumb creature who is so good to me?"

"Upon my word," said Tremaine, softening, "you have made an excellent defence, and shall be as good to your horse as ever you please. But pray go on; what next in your day?"

"Why, I have a flock of hungry pensioners to satisfy in my poultry."

"So has Miss Evelyn," said Tremaine, thoughtfully.

"Georgy and I are rivals," continued Careless, not perceiving his thoughtfulness: "but though she pretends a great deal, like a chit as she is, she knows little about it; besides she is all for Darking, and does not care for Game. Would you believe it, the last time she was at Bachelor's Hall, she did not know a Birchin pile from a Shakebag."

"I protest nor I," observed Tremaine, listlessly: "what do you do next?"

"I come in and breakfast," said Careless, "which I have well earned, and eat with a relish."

"A true pupil of Dr. Evelyn," cried Tremaine.

"And where will you find a better master?" answered Jack; "all his maxims deserve to be written in letters of gold."

"And his daughter's?" said Tremaine, in a scrutinising tone.

"What, my dear Georgy? why, she's a chip of the old block; or rather, as the saying is, she's all block herself,—for I don't know whether her sense or her beauty is the greatest."

"You speak feelingly," observed Tremaine.

"So I ought," said Jack, clinching it with a thump on the table as he said it, "for I love her as if she was my own flesh and blood."

"Indeed!" cried Tremaine, with a little earnestness; "but to be sure man and wife are the same flesh and blood."

"Oh! as to that, I'm too poor, and too old by a dozen years at least," said Jack, in a tone as if he had settled the matter with himself.

Tremaine became still more thoughtful, and the conversation languished.

"As to the Doctor," observed Careless, resuming it, "you are more obliged to him than you know of."

"As how?"

"Why, his having no claret yesterday was all a fudge."

Tremaine looked surprised.

"Poz, I assure you," continued Careless; "he told me before dinner that he knew it tore you to pieces, and desired me not to peach."

"It is a little extraordinary," remarked Tremaine, with some gravity, "that he should pretend to know me better than I do myself."

"Most people have that way," replied Careless; "but he had better authority still, for your physician in Northamptonshire is an old college friend of his, with whom he corresponds, and he told him, that if he could keep you from sour wine, and to early hours, you would do very well."

"He did!" exclaimed Tremaine, in a splenetic tone; "upon my word, I am much obliged to these two worthy gentlemen, for the trouble they take about me."

"I think you ought," continued Careless, taking him *à la lettre*, "and Miss Evelyn too!"

"Miss Evelyn, what of her!"

"Why, she was in the plot, and said it was a pity you were so spoiled,"

"She did!" cried Tremaine, stiffly.

"Yes, for she added you could be very delightful if you pleased."

"She is a very charming girl," exclaimed Tremaine; and milling the chocolate with rather increased fervour, asked his guest if he would not have some more.

It was declined: "And, indeed," added Jack, "it's well for me I have fifteen miles to ride, for it will require it all to carry off this good breakfast of yours."

"Why, what would you do if you were at home, and had no place to ride to?"

"That is a difficult supposition," retorted the guest; "but if I had not, I know a good enough remedy."

"Pray what!"

"To dig in my garden," said Jack.

"I have heard of such things, but never saw them," replied the host.

"Then come to Bachelor's Hall, and I'll shew you cauliflowers and cucumbers of my own raising, that beat even our friend's there," pointing towards Evelyn Hall; "indeed, it's the only thing he is a little touchy about."

"But how if it rains?" remarked Tremaine.

"Oh! I have abundant employment, for I make fish and fruit nets, play the fiddle, and have the best turning lathe in the county."

"Bachelor's Hall must be a place worth seeing," observed Tremaine.

"I shall be proud to shew it you," answered Careless.

"I suppose you read, too."

"Oh yes, a great deal: indeed there is now so much reading in the papers, that they take a great deal of time to keep up with them. The landlord of the Hound-and-Horn sends me an evening, three times a week, and I have myself the county papers; so that with all this, the Gentleman's Magazine, and the Annual Register, I have never been a week behind things since the French Revolution. But besides this, I have my brother's interest to manage at Belford, where there are a number of votes for his borough. I set up the club at the Hound-and-Horn on purpose, and this takes up a deal of time."

"And you are perfectly happy?"

"Perfectly."

"I really believe it," continued the host, "and if I might say such an ill-bred thing, if I were not Tremaine, I would be Careless."

"And if I were not Careless, I would be Tremaine," said Jack;—"that is"—after a pause, "provided you dined at four, and drank port."

"Oh! I dare say, when you began you would have several other provisos."

"Why, yes!" observed Jack, looking round; "I would not let this old hall be so thinly inhabited."

"Why, what would you do?"

"I would marry Miss Evelyn," said Jack, abruptly.

Tremaine was half choked.

"Marry, and keep good fellowship," continued Jack.

"I am too old, by your own account," observed Tremaine with emotion.

"That was as a poor man; but with your fortune!"

Tremaine looked grave, and a cloud shot across his brow. But he proceeded, "why even with my fortune, I fear—"

"Fear!" cried Careless, "pshaw! 'faint heart never won fair lady,' or as we used to say out of the Grammar, *Fortuna favet fortibus*. But talking of fortune, my good friend, will you now allow me to tell you what made me beat up your quarters so soon this morning?"

"It is time, I think," said Tremaine; "I had hoped it was because you had the same pleasure in coming to see me, as I had in receiving you."

"Why, yes! certainly that was one reason," answered Careless, "but I own I had another."

He then told him a story of distress, which as he himself was mixed up in it in a manner very much to his own credit, he explained not very perspicuously; but the result, as Tremaine gathered, was this:—That a neighbouring squire of immense estate, and very dissolute life, infamous withal for having ruined several young women, had let out to him his designs upon a tenant's daughter of great beauty and little prudence; that he (Careless) had warned the father of it, who, though deeply in debt to his landlord for rent, had forbidden him the house, and kept his daughter out of sight; that the squire had notwithstanding contrived to elope with the daughter on foot, who before she had gone half a mile had repented, and, while struggling to get free, was met by Careless; that much roughness, amounting to blows, had passed between him and the spoiler, who however was forced to forego his prize, whom Careless restored to her father; and in

revenge, the father had been ruined, by the seizure of everything he had. A threatened duel awaited Careless, who at the same time said, he did not think the fellow had pluck enough to go through with it; he was only indignant, that an injured man should be ruined, merely because the injury was not so great as had been intended.

"Thank God, however," exclaimed Careless, rubbing his hands, "I have been lucky for these poor people: the debt is above a hundred pounds, but I have already got above fifty. Dr. Evelyn gave me ten guineas, and my dear Georgy three; and to tell you the truth this is one reason for my visit to Lord Bellenden, where I know I may count upon at least twenty more; and here I own," added he, after a pause, and looking at the end of his whip, which he kept twirling on the ground, "I own all the folly of never, in my circumstances, having taken to any trade or profession. I have, by my idleness, deprived myself of all power to help these poor devils, except by turning beggar for them myself."

He blushed as he spoke the wodrs, but it was the blush of virtue, as well as of shame. Tremaine was penetrated; his heart was of kindred with the best, when called upon to act, and his indignation at an injury recited was ever ready to boil over. All the eloquence in the world could not have produced a more instantaneous effect than the simple narration of Careless, to whom he warmed as to a brother. Squeezing him therefore by the hand, he begged, if that were all, that he would give up his visit to Lord Bellenden, as he would himself cheerfully pay the balance of the farmer's debt. "And if the oppressor put his threat into execution, I shall think myself honoured," added Tremaine, "in attending you to the field."

"Why, as to the first, I will take twenty guineas, if you please," said Jack; "and as to the last, I am for ever bound to you, and it is spoke like true Yorkshire. But I fancy Squire Brown (who, by the way, I am glad to find has nothing of Yorkshire in him, but springs from a stocking-maker at Nottingham), will never court another meeting: the rascal has tasted a little crab-stick already,

and, as it is four days ago, I fancy he is in no humour to covet anything else."

"But my Lord Bellenden," said Tremaine.

"My dear friend," returned Jack, "the lad will never hook a pike as long as he lives, unless I go over to him: so thank you a thousand times, and pray give me leave to order Lightfoot."

The bell rang; the horse was brought; and Tremaine was left alone, thoughtful, occupied, and affected; and, let us add, less displeased than usual with himself, and with all the world.

CHAPTER XXXII.

SELF-EXAMINATION.

Pacing the forest,
Chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy.
SHAKSPEARE.

"It is certain," said he, as he walked through the garden-door towards the terrace, "that useful lessons may be gathered from small things. Who would have thought that this uninformed, untravelled, rough diamond, would furnish food even for Socrates!"

It was not that Tremaine thought himself Socrates; but he wished that Socrates could have had a Careless for a subject, in his reasoning upon human nature.

"He would have given a rare lecture upon it," said Tremaine, pacing the terrace.

The meditation continued some time, when he began to be clouded, by asking himself the important question, whether, with all his attainments, riches, and personal consequence, Jack was not the happier being of the two.

"And yet," continued he, advancing quicker along the terrace, as he advanced with his soliloquy "and yet as

happiness must be in the mind, and must therefore exist in proportion to the mind's cultivation, how is it possible? To dig in a garden, weave a net, or rub down a horse, is surely a very common affair, and not calculated to produce what all of us are courting with such eagerness, and none of us ever attain. He is indeed a benevolent, and kind-hearted creature," proceeded Tremaine, "and that does much;—but so are many: I cannot tax myself with any deficiency in this respect."

"I will consult Dr. Evelyn about him," concluded Tremaine. "He will dogmatize a little, and we shall have a dispute. No matter—the truth may be struck out between us."

Now it may have occurred to the reader, that whatever good sense may have appeared in Evelyn, anything but the truth had been infused by him into the mind of Tremaine. Yet that is not exactly so.

To have yielded his theories to Evelyn, would never have entered his contemplation; but as truth is the fairest flower of history, our duty requires that we should confess he was at least sometimes in the situation of that illustrious fellow-theorist, who, inculcating the sublime doctrine that pain was no evil, and seized with the gout in the midst of it, though he would not give up his theory, was forced to allow it an inconvenience. Now, as seclusion to the one philosopher was as incontestably an inconvenience as the pangs of the gout to the other, the pride of opinion had insensibly, and just so far yielded in Tremaine, that he thought Evelyn *seemed* the happier man of the two; and though it was still a problem in his mind, whether his happiness was on account, or in spite of his way of life, yet he was forced to own that the pursuits and tastes of such a man must at least be very bearable things.

The perpetual droppings, therefore, of Evelyn's maxims, began to be a little like the perpetual droppings of water upon marble; and obstinate as the mind of Tremaine may appear, it could not, any more than the marble, be exposed to these unceasing efforts, without insensibly giving way.

"There must be more in my friend's notions of life, than I am aware of," said the man of refinement, canvassing

the point ;—" and yet I think I have had as many occasions of judging as he. I will certainly probe the matter the first opportunity."

When that first opportunity happened does not appear, but the next meeting upon record will be found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A RIDE.

Come, woo me, woo me ; for now I am in a holiday humour, and like enough to consent.

SHAKSPEARE.

" It is all owing to our departing from nature, or being what you call refined," said the Doctor.

As this was round a table covered with wine, and fruit, and biscuits, perhaps the reader will imagine that Tremaine had again condescended to leave his own company and rich repast, for the society and plain but excellent board at Evelyn Hall ; or, perhaps, that the chimneys of Woodington had begun to smoke for others as well as for their solitary master. But it was none of these ; for the party were now all assembled under a large mulberry-tree in Jack Careless's garden. How they came there the Doctor can best explain. It is certain he was a bold man ; for he proposed to Tremaine one morning to accompany him to Belford on its market day. Tremaine shuddered, but consented ; though whether it was in obedience to the father, or the daughter, who looked uncommonly lovely that day, we have never exactly learned. It is certain that a ride with her through some green lanes—

" Green lanes ! why then, sir, I absolutely give them both up. A sensible woman of my acquaintance, in lecturing her daughters, used often to tell them—' if you are doubtful about encouraging a man, never ride or walk

with him; but, above all, never in a green lane!' Now a thousand reasons might be given for this. The retirement and sweetness of a lane when green—that is, in the very season of love;—the harmony it sheds over the senses;—no distractions—no distant prospect—but all confined to the one pleasing, and perhaps too interesting object; not even the expectation of a passenger to interrupt or recal the yielding sense;—'tis too much!"

"Well! but you forget, Tremaine was nearly twenty years older than the lady."

"True; but on that very account the lady was more off her guard; she could not suspect herself—so that there is more than even the usual advantage. Though a difference of twenty years is frightful in most places, it never is so little so as where no pretty fellow, joyous in youth and youth's attractions, can intrude to disturb you. No, no! if a man has this terrible disparity, and yet ventures to court a young girl, ever while he lives let him get her into a green lane."

Wise as all these reflections may be, it is certain that Tremaine was as innocent of making them as the lady herself. Yet it is also certain that when, with a frankness which spoke all sorts of natural things from her eyes, with a play of the most ingenuous countenance, as well as in the sweetest voice in the world, she begged him to accompany them, "because they would so enjoy the green lanes," he had nothing more to say. All fear of Belford vanished; and it is a question whether, if it had been even to London itself, he would not have ordered his horses as she desired.

What they said to one another is not known; for as three could not well ride abreast, the Doctor chose to proceed singly, in the manner of an advanced guard; the two grooms slunk far behind, being in effect absorbed, the one in giving, the other in listening to, a description of the superiority of London over country service—in which, from the dazzling account of wages, board wages, fees on buying and selling horses, and gratuities on tradesmen's bills, the latter was left to consider himself as a mighty inferior sort of a person.

Tremaine and the lady, therefore, were left nearly as much to themselves as if no human creature were near them. He was well mounted, rode well, and looked, as he always did, the gentleman; and when we add to this, that, with no inconsiderable powers of conversation himself, he was all eye and all ear for his companion:— and all this in a green lane! let me tell you, madam, the twenty years' difference sank to ten in a trice.

"I never had so pleasant a ride," said Georgina, as they emerged into the high road leading to the little town of Belford, which now appeared in sight.

"I wonder if he is at home," said the Doctor, looking at an old-fashioned house, close by the road side.

"Do let us stop and see," said Georgina.

"Voyons," rejoined Evelyn, dismounting, and giving his horse to his servant.

At this, he opened a little gate in a low wall, which on that side bounded a garden of hollyhocks, wall-flowers, and sweet marjorams, and proceeded to a large brown door with small pannels, and a huge projecting scollop-shell pediment. It was decorated with a brass knocker, and to this the Doctor most vigorously applied.

"For heaven's sake, where are we?" cried Tremaine.

"In Æbalia," answered the Doctor.

"Æbalia?"

"Yes, as I'll prove any day in the year."

Tremaine looking puzzled, and fancying this some far-fetched whim of the Doctor, "we are at Bachelor's Hall," said Georgina.

"*Entrez, Messieurs et Mesdames,*" exclaimed Evelyn, after parleying with a woman who opened the door, and whom he called by the familiar name of Becky.

Georgina was off her horse in a moment, and, followed by Tremaine entered the house.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

BACHELOR'S HALL.

He'll shew you where the bachelors sit.

SHAKSPEARE.

READER, hast thou never stopped thy horse at the corner of a village road, to view a peaceful dwelling that courted thee to look at it; retired in a little court of flowers, with here and there a lilac or a vine gadding over a casement window? A pine, perchance, rears its head over all, and even far above the loftiest chimneys of the mansion itself.

Hast thou never done this, and while thou hast surveyed its well-kept grass-plot, with gay geraniums, or its fresh-painted porch twisted with honeysuckle, said to thyself "this seems the abode of peace!" and cast many a look back upon thy perhaps stormy life, and wished for just such a port as this, even though thy then home might be a palace?

If thou hast done this, thou hast seen Bachelor's Hall.

While the gouvernante, Mrs. Rebecca, went to call her master, who was out of doors, Tremaine proceeded to examine the house, of which Evelyn and his daughter did the honours, seemingly as much at home as if they were the owners.

It had been always what is called in the country, a bettermost sort of farm-house, which Jack's eldest brother had fitted up for him, when he leased him the farm at a low rent. That not answering, he had let the lands, barns, and stables to an under tenant, who lived at the back of the house, and was therefore Jack's nearest neighbour.

A small hall with a brick floor, and well-whitened walls, set round with old prints of the most famous race-horses of their time, composed the entrance, which,

through Mrs. Rebecca's care, was always kept as clean as a daily washing could make it. To the right and left were parlours, one much larger than the other; and behind, the kitchen, the door of which, at the suggestion of Georgina, was skreened from sight by a large curtain of old tapestry.

"Let us repose ourselves in this comfortable room till he comes in," said Evelyn, leading the way into the left-hand parlour.

They entered into a neat, and, for a bachelor, rather a large room, where the Doctor immediately seating himself in an arm-chair, took up the county paper, which seemed to have been Jack's last study.

A sort of bow window, darkened by a large geranium trained into a fan, prevented much view at one end; but a glazed door leading into a cheerful garden, through which the sun was shining full, gave it much splendour at the other. On one side of the fire-place hung a large map of Yorkshire, with an accurate plan of the Ainsty and York minster, of which an ample print ornamented the chimney itself. On the other side, a glazed book-case, surmounting a scrutoir, immediately caught Tremaine's eye. The library consisted of a large Bible, and Whiston's Josephus, which had been Jack's mother's; the Farmer's Dictionary, the Gentleman's Recreation, and an old Chambers, all in folio; two or three volumes of the Spectator, and some Annual Registers, decorated the other shelves. But to Tremaine's surprise, there lay upon the chairs, seemingly as if they were often used, Ferguson's Lectures on Natural Philosophy, the Complete Clock-Maker, and a book on Surveying and Mensuration.

Tremaine expressed his wonder at this, as though he had not suspected Jack of a fondness for any science.

"You are mistaken," said Evelyn; "for our friend has an excellent mechanical head, and the cuckoo clock in the hall, which Becky always tells me is truer than Belford church, was made with his own hands. But, suppose," added he to Georgina, "you shew Mr. Tremaine our friend's study, while I finish this agri-

cultural report of the West Riding; I have a full column still to read."

Georgina laughingly led the way into the other parlour, which was about twelve feet square, and dignified through all the house by the name of study; though Careless, with more modesty and correctness, called it his workshop. In this, the first thing they saw was a carpenter's table, covered with tools. A large lathe took up a considerable portion of the room, together with nets of different kinds, the work of Jack's own fingers. On a little table in the middle lay a letter in his own hand, addressed "to the Editor of the Farmer's Magazine," which proved to be an essay on the best mode of cultivating the hundred-headed cabbage.

The master of the house not appearing, they were summoned by the Doctor, who had finished his report, to go in quest of him themselves.

"We shall see Jack's garden," said he, "which is neatness itself; though I don't much like it, for the fellow bullies me with his cauliflowers."

The party then sallied forth, and found Evelyn had not overrated his friend's skill: for Tremaine discovered, to his utter astonishment, that a mere *potager*, which he had never condescended to rank in any class of what he called gardens, was in reality not only an interesting, but a very pretty thing. A few borders of flowers, close to the door, yielded by degrees to compartments of the healthiest vegetables, in beautiful, because useful regularity. The espalier, and the honest gooseberry and currant, formed a green wall for each division; while at foot, the strawberry, and sometimes a row of daisies, kept everything spruce and regular.

The garden wall, well clothed, but still very low, bounded a lane which led farther into the village; and a green walk, parallel with it, ended in a large bench, close to the mulberry-tree, of which mention has already been made. Tremaine expressed his wonder, that with such a taste for the useful in gardening, this wall should have been left so low.

"Why, I have wondered too," said Evelyn, as they all paced the walk by its side; "but when I consider how much amusement, interest, and occupation Jack would be deprived of if it were higher, my wonder ceases."

Tremaine desiring explanation,—

"You must know," continued Evelyn, "this is Jack's exchange; his social walk, his world. Not a traveller on foot or horseback, not a post-chaise, farmer's or other waggon, but courses along this wall; and as he is universally known, and proportionally liked, whenever he is tired of himself—which, indeed, is not often —"

"He is happy," interrupted Tremaine.

"He is so," said Evelyn, eyeing the interrupter significantly.

"Go on," said Tremaine.

"Well! whenever he is tired of himself, or is otherwise disposed to it, he has only to come into this walk, and something, whether of gossip or business, immediately engages his attention. He has been seen to lean over that corner, where the bricks are a little deranged, for an hour together, talking to passengers, high or low, known or unknown; so that, in the words of a neighbouring farmer, who talked to me about it, 'it is thought he would make a foin parliament man!'"

"An hour together leaning over a wall!" said Tremaine with an emphasis, as if he had set the thing down in his own mind.

"It all depends upon taste," remarked Evelyn; "but the taste once allowed, I see no reason why a wall should not do as well as a rail."

"Nor I," said Tremaine; "but I profess I don't understand the taste."

"Then you are different from all your fine companions, in the fine world," answered Evelyn.

Tremaine declaring he did not comprehend him — "Perhaps," replied the Doctor, "I may have been misinformed; but judge for yourself. Some business took me last spring to town for a week. I left Georgy with her aunt, meaning to hurry home as fast as I could.

Meantime, as I like to look at the world every now and then, for fear I should lose its manners, and be quizzed, you know," added he significantly—

Tremaine smiled, and bade him go on.

"Well! I thought one way of examining customs was to go to what used to be called the Ring in Hyde-Park. But everything changes."

"As how?" asked Tremaine.

"Why, I could scarcely believe it myself," continued Evelyn, "but I found the Ring had been turned into a straight line."

"I know of no such alteration," said Tremaine.

"It was the same thing," proceeded Evelyn; "for the Ring I found absolutely abandoned, though, as a ride, one of the prettiest in the kingdom; and all the world, at the hazard of crushing one another to pieces, were parading in triple rows, up and down one long dull line, between the two gates."

"That seems bad," observed Tremaine, "and is new since I was there."

"To our point," said the Doctor. "When I entered from Piccadilly, I observed Sir Giles ——, the Baronet, you know, with a vacant face, waiting on horseback behind the rails of Rotten Row, in seemingly immediate expectation of something coming."

"And did it not come?" asked Tremaine.

"I think not," replied Evelyn, "for having gone round the Ring, I found him precisely in the same spot and attitude, and precisely with the same vacancy of countenance, seemingly as much as ever at a loss for what he expected. I had, however, in the mean time, made a similar remark on Sir Charles, Sir John, My Lord ——, and your friend the quizzer himself; who all, on horseback or on foot, were leaning over the rails, all along the road."

"There must have been some reason," said Tremaine.

"They were all 'foin parliament men,'" replied the Doctor.

"Pshaw!" said Tremaine, perceiving his drift,

" what possible harm can there be in gentlemen talking together in the manner you describe ?"

" None in the world," said Evelyn, drily: " you will observe I am on my defence: I only said that a wall was as good as a rail."

Georgina rather laughing, Tremaine said gravely, " Are we to understand, then, that there is no difference in persons or things? that this rough neighhourhood supplies as good society as London? that this dirty lane is equal to Hyde Park? and that you or I could have the same pleasures here, as in the conversation we found there ?"

" *Sçavoir*," answered the Doctor, who, from having been abroad, often interlarded his talk with foreign phrases, " *sçavoir* what the conversation is. That which I caught in my daily visit to the Park consisted, I will not say for the most part, but altogether, of the scandal of the gaming-house or *boudoir;* who lost the last thousand; and how long would it be before Lady A—— ran away to Lord B——, whom she had always wished to marry instead of her husband; or, at best, the empty speculations of people, who knew nothing at all about the matter, upon a change of ministry."

" And this you call London conversation ?" exclaimed Tremaine.

" Far from it," answered his friend; " I said it was London *rail* conversation, and as such not better, if not something worse, than country *wall* conversation. There is a great deal of good talk in London, which we can seldom command in the country: there is also a great deal of frivolity which *we* escape. Our bad and ridiculous passions may not indeed be eradicated, but they are not exercised."

" You allow then, at last," interrupted Tremaine " that solitude is a good thing."

" Not a bit of it," replied the Doctor.

" Suppose we ask Mr. Careless what he thinks of it,' said Georgina, " for there he is;" and she pointed him out.

Jack was at that moment in the very middle of the

farm-yard, on the other side of the garden, giving a lecture to his tenant, who listened with great approbation, upon what both agreed was a *desideratum* in farming science;—the best mode of baiting a mole-trap.

"I think I have made him understand it," said Jack, as he leaped the garden-wall, with the mole-trap in his hand.

"You deserve to be immortalised," observed Tremaine; "your own invention, I suppose?"

"An improvement," answered Careless," and I hope a very good one; it cost me a night's sleep, besides two or three consultations with the Squire Rector here, to say nothing of Georgy, who had a voice in it too; had not you, Georgy?"

"Upon my word," said Tremaine, bowing to them all, "the occupations of the country want no farther panegyric or comment to prove their superiority. A doctor of divinity, an accomplished young lady, and a gentleman of high degree, all bending the force of their genius, and giving their time to mole-catching! I want no other proof of the value of time in the country."

"And why not," said the Doctor, "as well as to fox-catching with squires, or paradox catching with philosophers, or rat-catching with politicians?"

Tremaine did not very well like the reply; and the conversation, after pausing, took another turn, and fell upon subjects concerning which we do not think it expedient to trouble the reader with any detailed report; shortly after which the whole party proceeded to the little town of Belford.

"Here, too, we are compelled to do another small violence to our historical feelings, and refrain from accompanying our friends in their ride. Suffice it that they went and returned without incurring any "moving accident" by either "flood or field;" not, however without having previously arranged to dine in pic-nic under the mulberry tree in Careless's garden.

"Charming!" exclaimed Georgina, on the proposal to the above effect being made by her father, in consequence of a set of gipsies having passed up the lane just as they were starting; "charming!" and that word 'charming'

silenced an objection which had already reached the end of Mr. Tremaine's tongue, but which, from the moment Miss Evelyn expressed her opinion, never got beyond it.

Careless declaring that nothing would be so delightful to him as the proposed plan, but the utmost he could command was a leg of mutton, the Doctor sent off his servant with a *carte-blanche* to the housekeeper at Evelyn Hall; and Tremaine would have sent him on to Woodington, with a like order to Monsieur Bertrand, his cook, had not the whole party declared against French cookery under an English mulberry tree, and even carried it so far, that an equally firm protest was made against the claret and sauterne for which Tremaine very strongly pleaded.

"You say true," my good friend, said the arbitrary Doctor, arguing the point; "prejudice is prejudice, whether English or French: but the stomach is above all fashionable feeling, and will speak for itself; and if these fine wines are acrid poisons to you instead of support, they will not destroy you the less because you are prejudiced for, or I against them."

"But consider his reputation," said Georgina, archly: "how would it sound at White's, if it were known that Mr. Tremaine were turned a mere Yorkshire squire, and had actually been detected dining in a cottage garden, and drinking port?"

"And at four o'clock," added Careless; "for by the Lord Harry that must be the hour, if you dine at all."

"And quite fashionable for a set of gipsies," said the Doctor.

Tremaine had nothing for it but to submit; and while he looked at the loveliest cheek in the world, damasked by the buxom air, he tacitly asked himself whether natural hours, natural pleasures, and such a companion, were not, after all, the true enjoyments of life?

Having now accounted for bringing our party under the mulberry tree in Careless's garden, we will proceed to relate the conversation exactly as it went on after dinner, as was opened in all due form in the beginning of the thirty-third chapter of this instructive work.

CHAPTER XXXV.

TABLE TALK.

Oh God! methinks it were a happy life
To be no better than a homely swain.

SHAKSPEARE.

"It is all owing to our departing from nature," said the Doctor, "or being what you are pleased to call refined."

"That is, being too much in buckram," added Jack, explaining.

"Aye," continued Evelyn, "I believe that is the true word; for a spoiled man of the world is no more at his ease in the ordinary course of society, or in every day occurrences, than a stiff German chamberlain in a full suit of buckram."

"Do you mean," asked Tremaine, "that there is no difference between a man of education and a ploughman?"

A ploughman was at that instant coming home from his day's work.

"God forbid!" said the Doctor; at the same time it is a great question, so often is education abused; and when education itself destroys simplicity of heart, the difference I would make would be against it."

By this time the aforesaid ploughman had come abreast of the mulberry tree, and perceiving Jack, pulled off his hat to him with a smile and a bow, composed in such an exact proportion of respect and familiarity, that it was difficult to say which was uppermost.

"How are you, Dick?" said Careless.

"I envy," said Tremaine, with an air of superiority, not at all concealed, "this happiness of Mr. Careless, who can thus draw pleasure from every one he meets."

"Why as to that," answered Careless, "I have not any great pleasure in Dick's company; but I believe he is a very honest fellow, and would do me a good turn if he could; more than we can say of many finer people;

and it would be well for the world, educated or not, if there were more Dicks in it."

"Surely," said Tremaine, preserving all his superiority, "you are not going to fall into the common-place notion, that people are more honest, or more kind, because they live in the country. We are not in 'Arcady the blest,' because we are in a garden in Yorkshire."

"I should like to hear this discussed," said Georgina.

"Suppose, then," continued Tremaine, smiling, and rubbing his hands at this little encouragement, "that this Dick, instead of being a very honest, good-natured fellow, was a good-for-nothing rascal; of which, with all deference, there may be some even in Yorkshire as well as elsewhere."

"Enough and to spare," cried Jack, allowing it.

"A poacher, for instance," observed Tremaine, thinking to rivet the matter with his companion.

"I would not be a hare in his way," answered Careless.

"What becomes of simplicity of heart then?" asked Tremaine, drily, and looking at Evelyn.

"Perhaps he would never have had it anywhere," said the Doctor, perceiving the fallacy.

"He is a good husband and father," remarked Careless, "and I'll answer for it, when he gets home to his supper, he is as happy as any of we."

"There is no doubt," said the Doctor, taking up the question, "but there are rogues in grain all over the world; but at least country rogues are coarser and more easily detected than you fine town gentlemen."

"Thanking you for the compliment," answered Tremaine,—"you forget Burke, who gave credit to the manners of France, which, by depriving vice of all its grossness, robbed it of half its evil."

"He spoke relatively," replied the Doctor, "for abstractedly I am sure he would not have held that opinion. For my own part, I would rather see vice in all its vulgarity and hideousness, than disguised under its veils and refinements."

"Would you then revive the plays of Charles the Second, or the novels of Mrs. Behn?" asked Tremaine.

"Not revive them," rejoined Evelyn; "but I would not exchange the liberty of writing in that style, for the more dangerous, because more disguised mischief of German sentimentality."

"Are you fond of the stage, Miss Evelyn?" asked Tremaine.

"Delighted with it," cried Georgina, "though only at York."

"Did you ever see the Stranger?" pursued Tremaine.

"I have wept over it several times," answered Georgina.

"Judge then between us," continued Tremaine.

"I have judged as often as I have seen that play," returned Georgina: "for I own to you, while my heart wept, my mind condemned."

"And this without papa?"

"Certainly not; though, as certainly, he never formed my opinion upon this particular tragedy."

"I don't understand," said Tremaine.

"Why I suppose he made her a good girl at first, and she has continued so ever since," cried Careless.

Georgina smiled, and went on to say "that she supposed no heart could withstand such personified misery as Kemble's acting exhibited, and that the tears he called forth, in the Stranger, were willing tears; but that she felt them to be very different indeed from those drawn by Mrs. Haller—for whose crime no excuse could be offered even by the poet."

"But would you not forgive?" inquired Tremaine.

"Certainly."

"And be reconciled?"

"Yes! as far as divesting myself of resentment, and a desire of punishment went:—but to restore to one's affection—to love again, as before love had been betrayed—to cherish a traitress as in the days of innocence!"—

"Pray go on, I am all ear," said Tremaine, delighted, and afraid of her pause.

"Why my heart tells me it would be impossible."

"And your virtue too?" added Evelyn.

"I did not immediately advert to that," said Georgina,

"I spoke only of my feelings;" and she blushed, as having seemed to have brought herself too forward.

"I will finish for you, my dear girl," said her admiring father. "Your judgment told you that to do what our refined friend here seemed to wish you to do, would be to make no distinction between guilt and innocence."

Tremaine hesitated for a while. He felt the force of truth, recommended in a tenfold degree by issuing from the loveliest mouth in the world, and during a moment seemed abstracted under the influence of conviction.

Rallying, however, he said, "Then, according to this, Dr. Evelyn, you would bear with the blasphemy of vulgar impiety, rather than read Voltaire or Bolingbroke."

"Not exactly that," replied Evelyn, "for there is something so dreadful in vulgar blasphemy, that my first feeling is always to knock the blasphemer down,—which, but for my cloth, I believe I should. But if you mean to ask which really does the most mischief, he who shocks our ears by a burst of indecency, for which he is immediately execrated and punished, or he who silently approaches and undermines the heart, while it thinks no harm, I am decidedly for the blasphemer, in preference to the well-bred ruffian."

"Voltaire a ruffian! Then I suppose Bolingbroke—"

"Still worse, because still more refined. But you shall not seduce me into an argument upon these gentry, Hume, Shaftesbury, Collins, the King of Prussia, *et id genus omne*, while this lovely evening invites all nature to happy quiet, I care not whether of the senses or the understanding. Do you think I can be polemical under a haystack?"

"The perfume is indeed delicious," said Georgina, "let us gather flowers."

"Do so," cried Evelyn, "and afterwards we will have a syllabub in Jack's porch, and afterwards a walk; meantime I will go to the alehouse." So saying he quitted the garden, and, to Tremaine's great surprise, actually bent his steps up the village, to the little inn that stood at the top of its street.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

TABLE TALK CONTINUED.

> Thou, Nature, art my goddess; to thy law
> My services are bound.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

To the alehouse! I see, reader, you are as much surprised as Tremaine himself was, when the Doctor bustled off; only I am not sure that the finer gentleman did not even begin to question the soundness of his friend's intellect.

"He at least carries the simplicity of nature as far as reasonable vulgarity can wish," thought Tremaine to himself.

To his daughter and Careless, however, this movement of Evelyn's seemed nothing extraordinary; and while Tremaine fell into a fit of musing, doubtful whether to set it down to the mere rusticity, which too familiar and mixing a disposition never failed, he said, to contract, or to wait for an explanation of this and two or three other oddities, his companions left him, to inspect, under the auspices of Mrs. Becky, the foaming repast which the Doctor had commanded.

Tremaine, wondering whether all this was happiness or not, found himself alone, or at least saw his companions at a distance, so occupied either with one another, or what they appeared to be preparing with their own hands, that he seemed to be neglected—a situation he never liked—and he immediately joined them.

"Can I not be useful?" asked Tremaine.

"Exceedingly so, if you like," answered Georgina.

"If you are not above it," said Careless.

"I can never be above a lady's commands, whatever the business," rejoined Tremaine, with an air of gallantry.

"Then carry this immense bench," proceeded Georgina, "to the door of the porch; and then this immense bowl to the cow, that is waiting for it under the elm."

"We may have hopes of him," cried Careless, perceiving that he prepared to obey.

The bench was placed, and the bowl carried; and to Evelyn's astonishment, when he returned, he found Tremaine in the act of bringing it back, and with his own hands placing it on the table within the porch.

It was a very pretty porch, composed of the trunks of some young trees, which Jack had cut in thinning his plantation, preserving all their nodosities, as stages for the honeysuckle and jessamine to climb—which they did most luxuriantly to their very tops.

"You never did this at Belmont," exclaimed Evelyn, who had rejoined them.

"I never had the same motive," said he, looking at Georgina, who seemed far from displeased.

"He will do in time," observed Careless.

The party took their seats, waited upon by Mrs. Becky and her niece, a young girl full of freshness, curtesies, and civility, who had milked the cow into the bowl, and now, in the whitest of aprons and cleanest of pinners, seemed anxious and proud to be employed.

"Confess," said Evelyn, quaffing his syllabub, "that a pastoral is not merely an imaginary pleasure."

"I never thought so till now," replied Tremaine, "and own I never enjoyed it before."

"What, not at Belmont?" retorted Evelyn, with some archness.

"I had no companions," said Tremaine, "and could not, therefore, have such a feast as this."

"But solitude is above company, and disdains such mean helps," continued the Doctor, drily.

"Even in solitude I could not have had this," replied Tremaine, "for I dined almost always by candle-light."

"Another reason for leaving off so inconvenient a custom," returned Evelyn; "for, besides that an exhausted stomach does not easily recover its tone, you lose the enjoyment of that delightful calm which evening always brings with it."

"Yet evening is evening, whether before or after dinner," retorted Tremaine.

"By the clock I grant you," replied Evelyn, "but not by the mind. There is a soothing stillness at the closing-in of day which seems naturally to say things are at rest; a proposition which a hungry stomach is by no means disposed to admit."

"This is mere raillery," cried Tremaine.

"I never was more in earnest," answered the Doctor, "nor would I exchange, first the little occupations, and afterwards the mental treat that evening brings with it, for all the supposed advantages, as they are called, of finishing business before dinner. We get rid of business, indeed, but only by getting an indigestion; which, for one, I would rather be without."

"What could public men do?" asked Tremaine.

"What used they to do?" rejoined Evelyn. "What do they even now?—for I am misinformed if business is not now more agreeably done in the House of Commons, by its leaders dining at three o'clock, than when they exhausted themselves in debate, in order to have full leisure, after it was over, for a table which they could not enjoy."

"You mentioned occupations, continued Tremaine; "I should be glad to know, in the country, what occupations can press, so as to call for afternoon exertion?"

"If they do not," rebutted Evelyn, "your only reason for late dining fails, because you may then choose your hour. But I own there are a thousand little superintendencies of domestic economy, which I am not above, and should not if I were master of Woodington; and even if there were not, there are exercises, or reading, which, if it were only to *earn* our evening walk, and so make it more valuable, would employ me with pleasure both at home and abroad."

"Your superintendencies?" said Tremaine, pressingly.

"Why, as a country 'squire, I should not be afraid of offending, by a thing so orthodox as the stable. I love my horse as I do anything that seems, by its docility and patience, to love me in doing me good."

"That's downright Yorkshire, and quite right," cried Careless.

"It is a real treat, therefore, exclusive of the advantage, to see him as comfortable for the night as I am myself. But exclusive of this," continued the Doctor, "as a philosopher, or even a *bon vivant*, I do not blush to say, that watering my own vegetables, or at least seeing it well done, is in summer not only one of the most useful, but the pleasantest of occupations."

Tremaine looked at Georgina. "You will not get her of your side," added he: "for while the Diocletian cabbages we talked of the other day employ all my care, she is not the less intent upon her roses and her mignonette."

"They seem so grateful!" said Georgina.

"But your exercises, Sir?"

"Oh! quoits, bowls, or even nine-pins; these help the salutary process of digestion; after which the calm which the later hour brings on is perfect, whether in a walk lighted up by the moon, or a little social conversation on

Work of day past, or morrow's next return.

This sends me to rest, if I have no guilt on my conscience, with much more chance of the sweetest of all refreshment, sleep, than with the remorse that always attends idleness, and wine and coffee reeking in my throat."

A pause ensued, during which Georgina took her father's hand, with looks expressive of that approbation which is derived from the most perfect coincidence of sentiment. She then turned to Tremaine, as if expecting a counter system; but he held his peace and the pause continued.

It was broken by Careless exclaiming, "I should be glad, Mr. Tremaine, to know what you have to say to all this?"

Luckily for Tremaine (who in truth had but little to 'say to all this,' and what is more, felt as much), the servants brought the horses round by the spot where they were sitting, and the conversation and the party broke up together—Georgina anticipating the delicious

moonlight ride they would have home, and Tremaine taking leave of his host with a heartier hand shake, and a feeling of more internal respect, than he had ever yet been inclined to entertain for him.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

REFINEMENT STILL ASSERTS ITSELF.

> The self-same sun that shines upon his court,
> Hides not his visage from our cottage, but
> Shines on all alike.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

"AND how do you like Jack's house, and Jack's life?" said Evelyn, breaking a pause after they had ridden about a quarter of a mile.

It is quite enough that *he* should like them," replied Tremaine.

"He is the happiest creature in the world," added Georgina; "his wants are so few."

That would apply to a savage," remarked Tremaine.

"True," said Georgina, submittingly.

But the Doctor never liked to submit. "Jack is no savage," said he; "he does not make so good a bow as you or I do" (the Doctor once piqued himself on his bow), "nor perhaps has he as many ideas drawn from other men's heads; but what he has are genuine and sound, and his heart is in the right place."

"That might do for a savage too," said Tremaine.

"Yes! I suppose when he cuts his prisoner in pieces, and eats him," returned Evelyn. "Jack's wants being few, does not make him the more like a savage, though it may make him happier; for these wants are so moderate, yet so interesting, as to be just enough within his reach to prevent any great anxiety, and just enough out of it to give him occupation."

"But pray, may I ask what is Mr. Careless's ambition?" said Tremaine.

"You had better inquire of Georgy," replied Evelyn, "for I believe it is to please her."

Georgina laughed, and Tremaine felt a sort of curiosity, amounting even to uneasiness, which was to himself unaccountable.

"You will allow," continued Evelyn, "that in the indulgence of *one* of the great passions, love, we country and retired people have a right to take the lead; for who ever sighed for Amarillis in Pall-Mall!"

"Am I to understand, then," said Tremaine with some solemnity, "that Mr. Careless is Miss Evelyn's lover?"

"The thought never came into his head," said Georgina eagerly; "he has more sense."

This cut two ways, and did not diminish Tremaine's seriousness.

"He has then no ambition?" contiuued Tremaine, inquiringly.

"That I deny," said Evelyn, "for if his cucumbers are earlier than mine, or his butter better than Georgy's, there is no end to his crowing. But if his brother's party, under his leading at Belford, get the better of the Whig opposition there, I assure you no leader of party in the House of Commons feels a greater elevation of spirit."

"And you compare this to the ambition of a statesman, or a general, who saves his country?"

"I do not compare their ambition," replied Evelyn, "but I may compare their happiness. Were Jack a statesman or a general, condemned to the life he leads, he would no longer be happy—nay, would die of disgust. But he is neither fit for the one nor the other, and luckily knows it. Shining, however, in what he is fit for, he is happy;—not so tumultuously happy as the persons you mention, when, conquerors in arms or in eloquence, they reap the laurel; but neither so exposed to buffet with contending passions, to the uncertainties of fortune, or to heart-eating cares."

"Yet how much more powerful the interest of their pursuits! you will not deny this?" said Tremaine.

"I am not sure," replied Evelyn; "but for argument's sake at present I will not."

"How much greater, therefore, the happiness?"

"That is what I question," remarked Evelyn; "for happiness is by no means always proportioned to interest."

"Give me an illustration," cried Tremaine.

"A gambler," answered his friend.

"And yet what happiness is like the gambler's, at the moment he is receiving his winnings? But are statesmen and warriors gamblers?"

"Yes! of the highest cast; for they play for kingdoms, and their stake is—their fellow creatures."

"Yet if Jack's horse is lame; his dogs behave ill; his cabbages canker; or his butter sour?" pursued Tremaine, almost contemptuously.

"The stake is not so high," returned the Doctor, "as where an army is beaten, and a country ruined. But it is not of gamblers, any more than of statesmen and warriors, that I particularly speak; it is to *you* I address myself—you, who sacrifice so much to the polish of artificial life, that I fear you have lost your relish for a natural one."

"Miss Evelyn, at least, is no enemy to elegance," said Tremaine.

"Oh no, nor papa either," answered Georgina; "but we both think there is as much or more real elegance in many of the simplest scenes of nature, than in all the wonders of art."

"My own girl!" exclaimed Evelyn.

"In poetry I have found it so," replied Tremaine, with a sigh.

"In plain prose I find it so every day," said Georgina.

"From you I should be glad to learn in what," cried Tremaine.

"A bed of flowers," answered Georgina, "particularly if I have reared them myself: these evening birds,

which now so charm us; or this hay-field, which so delights with its perfume."

"'Tis better than all Smith's shop can supply, though snuffed from a golden bottle," added the Doctor. "What a pity they are lost upon you!"

"Lost! nay, now I cannot understand you."

"Yet 'tis true," retorted his friend; "not in your theory indeed, but in your practice, in your life, in your hours."

"Have mercy and explain," said Tremaine.

"Why, is it not near nine o'clock?" asked Evelyn.

"What then?"

"Why, being always at dinner at that hour, you never see, much less smell a hay-field, or hear an evening blackbird," replied Evelyn.

Tremaine felt pushed, and was not sorry to be relieved by their arrival at Evelyn Hall.

Tremaine was about to take leave, when the Doctor telling him, if he would come in, Georgina should give him an opera of Mozart, which had only just arrived; and Georgina adding, he might afterwards examine as he went home, whether the moon was not as beautiful in plain prose as in the poetry of Milton, he helped her from her horse, and attended her into the house.

Perhaps he felt a little beaten by his friend in the argument, and wished to renew the attack; certainly he did not wish to part with his fair companion so soon: we shall not attempt to decide which of these feelings was uppermost with him, when he found himself satisfied to be seated between his two friends in the music-room.

Mozart was now unfolded, and Georgina began to tune her harp, and her father his bass; when perceiving that the harp was of uncommon elegance, and the tapers wax, Tremaine wished for a parting blow.

"You are not such philosophers," cried he, pointing out these circumstances, "but you are content to allow your theories to shift for themselves, without the homely support of practice."

"Why, I confess I have a little more of Plato than Diogenes in me," answered Evelyn; "not but what the

cynic was after my own heart, when he told Alexander to stand out of his sunshine, as the only good he could do him."

"It should seem, however," returned Tremaine, looking at the candles, in massive and very bright silver, "that you would not have emulated his dirty lamp and coarse oil any more, probably, than his wooden bowl, or rather his hat, after the boy who drank out of his, had taught him he had yet something to retrench."

"Your most obedient," said the Doctor, giving the parting screw to his bass, and not at all displeased at his fellow disputant's perseverance: "but pray when did I wish all the world to turn cynics, or not to use the good things God has given them? Thanks to my grandfather, I am possessed of these handsome candlesticks, and wherewithal to do without the money into which they might melt; and I happen to like wax better than tallow. As for the cynics, they were a pack of dirty fellows, and I should therefore doubt their happiness."

"You allow, then," said Tremaine, with some triumph, "that elegance may contribute to happiness!"

"I do," answered Evelyn; "but we may differ as to elegance,—which to me is most attractive when most left to nature."

"Yet you admire the arts, the statues and temples of Phidias, the cunning of the ancients in the ivory and brass of Greece, and of the moderns in the pictures and palaces of Italy?"

"They are charming, and excite me even to think of them," said Evelyn; "but a living landscape, a thatched roof, or honeysuckle porch, a well-ordered garden, even such as Jack's, are also elegant; and though they occasion not our wonder at the workmanship,—as the statue, the painting, and the palace do,—still they often create our admiration, and would always soothe us into a happy enjoyment of them, if the mind had not lost its powers to enjoy any thing simple, by a perpetual course of every thing luxurious."

Both Tremaine and Georgina smiled at the eagerness

of Evelyn in uttering this—who went on to observe, "It is not that I quarrel in the least with a taste for the fine arts, but contend merely that we may be as happy without them."

"Then why pursue them?" asked Tremaine, with the confidence of a man who had finished all by his question.

"I suppose," answered Evelyn, "because those who do so find their happiness lies that way, and then they are to be pursued, as those other things are pursued which confer happiness in another way. You love painting and building; I, music and gardening; Jack, hunting and handicraft; while all are within our reach, all are happy."

"What, equally so?"

"Yes! even though one of us is busied about the Apollo Belvidere, and another about a mole-trap."

"This is really too gothic," said Tremaine, "and I shall complain of you to Miss Evelyn."

Miss Evelyn rewarded him by saying she believed, but was not sure, she was of his side. "Indeed," said she, "I see not the advantage of a cultivated taste, if it do not tend to make us both better and happier."

Tremaine's heart danced within him, and he was about to express his pleasure, when Evelyn desired them to observe, that it was not whether taste would not make a given individual happier than he was before, all things properly concurring, but whether another who had not that taste might not be as happy with some other pursuit.

"If the taste," said he, "happened indeed to be for things out of one's reach, it may even be productive of uneasiness; and when this is so, a less refined taste, that is perpetually gratified, may enjoy a greater sum of pleasure in the end."

"But suppose equal facilities of gratification," said Tremaine; and Georgina, to his delight, echoed the question.

"Why, I allow," answered Evelyn, "the chances are on the side of taste, because the mind is not only more

harmonised, but, from the pleasures being seated in the mind, we are more independent."

"Who can be alone," said Tremaine, with emphasis, "with Homer and Shakspeare for his companions? or, who see the Florentine gallery without feeling his soul elevated to rapture?"

"I own I never could," said Evelyn.

"No, papa," observed Georgina, "nor listen to Cimarosa, or Jomelli, or Handel. Come, I am for Mr. Tremaine, and you must confess the advantages are on the side of dear painting, dearer music, and dearest poetry."

"I confess nothing," said her father, "though he eyed her animation and her playfulness with delight. "I have told you that those who have a taste for these things do well to cultivate them; for when the arts are acquired, they fully repay one."

"How fully!" said Tremaine, with something approaching to enthusiasm; "they soften the heart, and with it the manners; yet, at the same time, strengthen the mind and sharpen the understanding. I can compare their effects to nothing but the still sweeter influence of woman; for of the one as well as the other, Otway would certainly have said—

We had been brutes without you."

In the eyes of Georgina, Tremaine never looked so well as when he said this.

"I believe you are in league together," cried Evelyn, resuming the subject, "to take me by my weak side. You know how I like all this lore: and I, at least, can command a great deal of happiness out of it, therefore it is valuable to *me*. But I will produce you persons who would not understand me when I talked of them as treasures, who yet may have treasures of their own, and therefore may be as happy. We will take Archimedes for example. Do you think, when he continued busy in his problem, even as the savage who murdered him had lifted his sword, that he could be less happy than Orpheus with his lute, though that lute made trees and mountain

tops 'to dance when he did sing?' No, no! pursue the fine arts by all means, if you have a taste for them, but despise not those who have not, under any notion that you monopolise the sources of interest. It is the *sufficiency* of the interest, in most lots, that makes most lots equally happy; and God Almighty be thanked for it, none need triumph over another. No! not even you," (perceiving Tremaine about to reply,) "over our simple, honest, and good Careless. He has not your fine mind; but there will be a blank in society, not easy to fill up, when he dies; and as to his mole-trap, if he take an interest in it equal to that which you take in your Phidias, depend upon it he is equally happy."

"Can this be so?" asked Georgina.

"God forbid that it should not," answered her father, "or that the happiness of man should depend upon such limited sources. The truth is, it is a compound thing, and often a very wayward, and even whimsical one. All that we know for certain is, that the more extravagant and pampered the fancy, the less we are likely to grasp it; and while he who, from the mediocrity of his fortune, has enabled himself to be interested in the growth of a vegetable, may be perfectly happy, another, revelling in wealth, may become so jaundiced from want of regulation, that all the world may exclaim with Pococurante, '*Quel grand homme! Rien ne peut lui plaire!*'"

Georgina smiled, and even laughed at this sally, which by no means pleased Mr. Tremaine, who asked if he meant to *exclude* the rich from their chances of happiness?

"God forbid!" again replied the Doctor—"All I am stickling for is, in fact, what I do every Sunday in the pulpit—the equality of the chance for happiness among all human creatures, with proper regulation: which word, not being very grateful to the ears of the wealthy, ten to one but their chances are less than those of their inferiors. Who ever heard of *ennui* among threshers or dairy-maids?"

"We are speaking of persons of leisure," said Tremaine, gravely.

"True," replied Evelyn, "and even among them, the secret is this:—'depart not from Nature, and she will not depart from you.' If luxury alone can satisfy the rich, they never will be satisfied; for the sense must be more and more provoked, or it is luxury no longer, and then the minion will envy the man of nature, and would pawn his wealth to be like him."

"Would you then have the rich not use their riches? not build, or plant, or collect? not engage in politics? not be ambitious? not embark in great and vast speculations, tending to their country's good?"

"By no means; I would have them do all this. They should build the castle, plant the wood, and fill the palace with wonders. I would have them do all but gamble: by which I mean, gamble with their pleasures as well as their fortunes. But though, in doing all this, they are greater benefactors to mankind, they are not happier than others. Provided proportion be observed, the merit, and therefore the happy feeling, is the same."

"Oh! useless elegance, and useless, despised genius—the genius of poetry—so to describe it, if this be true!" cried Tremaine.

"I know not your allusion," said the Doctor.

"I allude to a description that would 'take the prisoned soul and lap it in Elysium,'" said Tremaine; "a description that would for ever shame the dull cold feelings for which you are an advocate."

He then, with a very enthusiastic tone of voice, but with a precision of diction which only made the beautiful passage more impressive, repeated:

> The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
> Burnt on the water: the poop was beaten gold,
> Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
> The winds grew love-sick with them. The oars were silver,
> Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
> The water which they beat to follow faster,
> As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
> It beggar'd all description: She did lie
> In her pavilion (cloth of gold, of tissue),
> O'erpicturing that Venus, where we see
> The fancy outwork nature: on each side her

> Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
> With divers coloured fans, whose wind did seem
> To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
> And what they undid, did.

"What think you of this peerless description of the power of art?" said Tremaine.

"I think more of Shakspeare in it," answered Evelyn, "than the happiness of Cleopatra. She must have been much put to it, to have found such refinement necessary; and depend upon it, the woman who sweeps her own cottage, makes her own bed, and afterwards can afford to sit of an evening at her door inhaling the bean-flower or may, beats her out and out, though she retire afterwards to a flock bed. It is not that these things are bad in themselves; but I hold that they are utterly indifferent, and *may* be criminal. I will, however, give you passage for passage," continued Evelyn, "not so rich or dazzling, but scarcely less pleasing, and certainly more philosophical:

> To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
> To throw a perfume on the violet,
> To smooth the ice, or add another hue
> Unto the rainbow, or with taper light
> To seek the beauteous eye of Heav'n to garnish,
> Is wasteful, and ridiculous excess.

The subject here seemed to pause, and with it the speakers; while she who had been chiefly the listener, though listener most observant, was lost for some moments in pleasure, in reflecting upon the feeling, the cultivation, and balanced powers of mind with which the conversation had been carried on.

Recovering, however, from her reverie, in a few minutes she exclaimed, "All this is very charming, but it must not make us forget Mozart;" and she swept her harp like a muse.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

For I can sing and speak to him
In many sorts of music.

. . . . . .

He plays o' the viol de gamba.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE finger of Georgina had begun to be formed in Italy at the age of twelve; and a natural taste, aided both by instruction and practice ever since, might have ranked her with the best of modern amateur players. The wildness, the imagination, the melody, and the learning of Mozart, could scarcely be better exemplified; and Tremaine, who was a real votary, began a thousand comparisons within himself between her and Lady K. W., the Marchioness of D., and the Honourable Miss R., without being able to say to which he would give the palm.

"Strange!" said he, "that this should be the finger of a country parson's daughter!"

Now the finger of the parson himself was a little slighted by this; for the steadiness of Evelyn's ear and execution was no small addition to the concert; and Tremaine, exclusive of enjoying a high treat in the abstract, collected at every moment strains that had often delighted him at the Opera, at the Ancient Music, and the Argyll. The flowery mazes of Figaro recalled many a brilliant idea to his fancy, and boleros, fandangos, and the most sympathetic airs of all kinds, not only charmed his ears, but brought scenes before his eyes, which seemed to make the interval of the last eighteen months an absolute dream.

What were the associations that caused these revived recollections, we will not now inquire,—but Georgina's music closed the day he had passed with her and her father, in a manner so tumultuously pleasing, that if his

horses had not known the way from Evelyn to Woodington much better than himself, it would have been difficult to say whether he would have got home without first crossing the little town of Belford, a circuit of at least ten miles out of the road, which common passengers, in their common senses, usually travel between the two houses.

Yet the moon shone bright on every pace he took, and the path through the wood, and over the little bridge, and up by his own park paling, into his own court yard, lay as plain before him, as, according to a vulgar simile, the nose in his face; which nose (be it said by the bye) was a very handsome nose, large and aquiline, and denoting (as Georgina, who had studied Lavater, said to herself) a disposition to dignity and sensibility.

Be this as it may, he had more than once missed his way, spite of the sensible remonstrances of Bay Malton, and the scarcely less intelligible representations of Jonathan his groom. At length, however, about midnight he found himself in the act of retiring, with the ever-faithful Monsieur Dupuis at his side, unfolding his night-cap.

But the age of confidents is gone; at least, of male confidents; for observe, gentle reader, we will not swear that the sweet Seraphina, or Zephyrina, or the Lady Olivia, or Mary, or Ellen, or whatsoever else the name by which thou designatest the lady whom thou lovest, does not, for want of a better, confide to the supposed faithful bosom of Mrs. Betty, or Mrs. Sally, all that she thinks of him who gazed upon her so tenderly at the Opera, or pressed her hand so gently as he led her through the mazes of the waltz.

Leaving the more learned to settle this point, 'tis certain that Tremaine went to bed, without vouchsafing one single word to Monsieur Dupuis, of what he thought of the Rector-squire's daughter, or of the Rector-squire himself.

And yet think of both of them he did, with interest, and even with tenderness, insomuch that he had turned oftener in his bed than that Sybarite who was so molested with the double rose-leaf, before his eyes were visited with sleep.

Yet was it not a feverish restlessness, for he had neither heat, nor thirst, nor pain. On the contrary, though his senses were watchful, they were not tormented, nor even displeased, particularly when he found that, in real beauty, Lady Gertrude Bellenden herself did not exceed Georgina, and that in natural grace, far more in *naïveté* and sense, she was not to be compared with her.

Two considerations alone made him a little restless: the recollection of all the unsettled collisions of thought which he had had with the father, and the uncertainty he was in as to the disposition towards him of the daughter; an interruption not a little heightened by another uncertainty, how far it was even possible for a girl of twenty to be in love with a man nearly twice her age.

Yet, to love a woman who could not love again, revolted his mind, whatever might be the disparity, and however reasonable the objection of the lady. But, notwithstanding all this, the night of Tremaine, though indubitably not quiet, was yet as indubitably among the least unpleasant he had passed for a longer time than he would have chosen to confess.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

PRACTICAL VIRTUE.

My master is of churlish disposition,
And little recks to find the way to Heaven,
By doing deeds of hospitality.

SHAKSPEARE.

In the morning when he awoke, a letter was put into his hands, which he desired Dupuis to open; the said letter being in fact in a very dirty state, and plastered, moreover, with a more than reasonable quantity of red wafer, still wet from the thumbs of the writer. It was as follows:

"HONERED SIR,

"This cums to tell you, that yure honered father was good to me when a boy—and wold be a frend to me now, if he knowd. And I marryd Mary of the Chekers, nere Squire Careless, his hous, and my father-in-law turnt us both out, because we marryd, tho he givd consent before the same, and is diing, and is cut us of with nothing, tho Mary is his only child, and yure honer being his landlord, might do us a power of good, and yure Petishiners shall ever pray.

"JOHN and MARY CHRISMASS.

"P. S.—Doctor Evelyn, he is our frend, and Mary's mother, she was Miss Georgi's mother's maid, and she is ded, and Miss Georgi she said she wold do all she cold, but cold not do much, seeing my father be so hard."

"And who is this Christmas?" said Tremaine.

'Twas more than Monsieur Dupuis could tell, though he observed, "*apparemment*, from the manufacture of the letter, *quelqu'un de la canaille*."

"Inquire; and order my horses immediately," said Tremaine; "I will ride out to breakfast."

Monsieur Dupuis with infinite wonder obeyed; calling out in the court-yard, "Holla! Monsieur Jonathan groom! you no longer lie abed—my master, he ride before breakfast." Then, as if struck with astonishment, he betook himself (as upon these occasions he always did) to the housekeeper's room, exclaiming, "*il n'est plus philosophe, notre maître;* he go to breakfast out of door;—*et il veut savoir* who is one Chrismass; begar, he know how to fold de lettre ver vel, dat Monsieur Chrismass."

The good Watson, who, though accustomed to Dupuis, did not always make him out, on this occasion understood him perfectly; for Mary Christmas had been her *protégée* when a child, before she left the country, and Miss Evelyn had recommended her to her good offices after her return; and to serve Miss Evelyn gave an additional impulse to the good woman's naturally kind disposition.

In fact it was she who gave Christmas's homely epistle

to Mr. Dupuis, to be delivered to his master when he awoke; for she knew that old Giles, the father, was not expected to live through the day, and that he had not only always threatened to leave the world without forgiving his daughter, but had actually sent for an attorney to bequeath the whole of his property to a distant relation.

All these circumstances Watson desired Dupuis to communicate to his master; but the valet's powers to comprehend them, particularly in English, were not very capacious; and finding that the fortune of a young couple depended upon it, and being moreover not an ill-natured fellow at bottom, he very wisely told Watson she would do much more good by telling the story herself.

Watson thought so too, and desiring an audience of her master, while he was dressing related the tale with great effect; particularly when she interlarded it, as she frequently did, with the fact of its giving so much pleasure to Miss Georgina, who she knew had been so fond of her mother, to whom she had made a promise always to be a friend to Mary.

Whether the good woman saw farther than others by that kind of natural instinct which is independent of all education, and which is emphatically called mother-wit—or whether mere chance, or, to speak more justly, the truth, produced this frequent allusion to Miss Georgina—certain it is, the topic was soon perceived to be not disagreeable; and Tremaine grew impatient with Dupuis to finish his dressing, in order that he might get in time to old Giles.

"And yet," said he, with dissatisfaction, "what can I do? I never saw the old man in my life; and my being his landlord is nothing, since it can only work on his expectations, which are now all in the grave."

As he rode briskly over the village, this strain of thought accompanied him, and he began to reflect, more than he had yet done, how little even riches could effect in a life of absolute seclusion, and how much more useful a practical, plain, and neighbourly man might be, than all the most refined though richest speculatists in the world.

"I wonder," said he, as he dismounted at the Checquer's door, "that Dr. Evelyn has not been able to soften this hard old man!"

Now it happened at that very moment the Doctor was descending the little stairs of the inn from the sick man's chamber, where he had passed nearly the last hour. Their mutual surprise may be supposed.

"What do I see!" began the Rector, looking first at his friend, and then at the village dial, which was glittering in the sun; "the refined Mr. Tremaine, in a low ale-house, and not ten o'clock!"

Tremaine never felt less refined than at that moment.

"I see you are before me as usual," he exclaimed, "for I apprehend we are both on the same errand."

"I am very glad to hear it, if we are," said the Doctor, doubtingly. "I thought that to visit the dying had only belonged to my cloth."

"We will not dispute here," answered Tremaine, coming to the door; "I only hope you have succeeded in what will have been a good work."

"Why, I trust it is a good one, if I have given a poor sinner a chance the less of the displeasure of his Maker, who has summoned him."

The maid of the house, who was washing the steps, and the mistress of a little shop over the way, together with two or three other neighbours, had assembled at the door on seeing the Rector, and knowing the danger of the old man; and at this speech, which was very solemnly uttered, all involuntary, as it were, dropped a curtsy; a straggling traveller, who was drinking his pint on a stone bench in the street, pulled off his hat; and even the ostler, who was remarkable for being a very idle careless fellow, stopped whistling, and seemed impressed with respect.

We are greatly mistaken if here were not examples of that religion of the heart (as it may be emphatically called), the very existence of which the world, and particularly the refined world, are but little disposed to allow.

Be this as it may, the little audience collected round

the Rector looked their inquiries earnestly, though respectfully, as to the state of both mind and body, in which he had left the dying man.

The character and circumstances of old Giles were in fact known to all his neighbours; and as his daughter Mary was very much beloved for her unoffending manners, rendered still more interesting by her having been an absolute slave to her father, there seemed to be a sympathy in all the inhabitants of the village as to her fate.

In truth, this old man was one of those capricious, selfish tyrants, to be found in all ranks of life, and only more noted in the higher, from their greater power of making people unhappy. He had married a meek and obsequious woman from the Doctor's family, who never ceased to lament the day when she left his protection, and the care of the 'sweet Georgy,' to bestow herself on a brute, who, having bruised her body with stripes, bruised her heart at the same time till it broke.

To her place as a sufferer, succeeded the mild Mary, who, from a feeling of filial piety, bore with all his tyranny, and nursed him through many an illness, the consequence of the most intemperate indulgence.

Her the young Christmas addressed, and not only won, but won with her father's consent; for he was then heir to a neighbouring farmer, who was supposed to be rich. But the father broke after the banns had been published, and the news reached Giles at the moment when the parties (all but himself, who was confined to his chair) were assembled at the altar. He could, therefore, take no step to stop the ceremony; and the parties married, returned home to ask a blessing, and were instantly turned out of doors.

The tears, the entreaties of Mary, and the promised industry of John, had no effect. This wretched man was unappeasable in his revenge; he resolved to crush them for ever; yet was still so much impressed by character, that, having no relation whom he personally knew, he sent for Evelyn, to whom he offered to bequeath his whole fortune, amounting to some hundreds of pounds. Evelyn not only refused the offer, but

seriously reproved him for his savage injustice; and many a visit did he pay him, urging all that feeling, or morality, or religion could supply—but urging in vain.

Nevertheless, and with all his brutality, Giles had some sense of a life to come; and, as his fits of illness were more or less critical, it was observed, he was more or less obstinate in his determination. On the day our party dined at Careless's, his pains having left him for an hour or two, he actually ordered an attorney to be sent for from Belford, with a view to leave his fortune (as Evelyn had refused it) to the only relative he knew of, a tradesman at Leeds; and it was to obviate this that Evelyn (as we have before related) visited the alehouse while the syllabub was preparing. He succeeded in getting a delay till the next day; and during the night Giles's disorder having returned, Evelyn, who had desired to be apprised of his state, went over to him early, in order to take advantage of it. He found him indeed dying, and represented so forcibly to him the impossibility of *his* obtaining mercy who showed none, that the will was given up, and Mary and her husband actually sent for. Such was the conduct, and such the reward of the practical Evelyn!

"I envy you," said Tremaine, as the servant, whom the Doctor had despatched for Mary and John, returned with them up the street. "I should never have accomplished this, though I came with that view."

"Perhaps not," returned Evelyn, "but you don't know unless you had tried, and at any rate the intention ——"

"It was, unfortunately, but intention," interrupted Tremaine, with a strong emotion of self-blame, "for I was personally unknown."

"That's a fault that may mend, *if you please*," returned Evelyn.

"Shall I own to you that even my good intentions were, I fear, not pure—not unmixed?"

"As how?" asked Evelyn, surprised.

"I had heard of Georgina's interest in these poor people, and I wished to please *her*, as well as relieve them."

"*Bon!*" said Evelyn; "but a good deed is not the less so because it pleases a pretty girl as well as our consciences! You must at least show these poor people how willing you were to have served them; and I apprehend your breakfast will not be eaten with the less appetite for this little exertion, even though it be at Bachelor's Hall, and not of the very best Spanish chocolate. Jack waits for us by this, for he must be returned from Belford, whither I sent him; so as soon as I have carried Mary up to her father, I'll join you."

Tremaine just waited to make himself known to Christmas and his wife, to whom he promised every protection, and then proceeded to Jack's, whom he found occupied in placing part of a cold round of beef with his own hands on the table.

"This is what I never expected," said Careless, staring, yet shaking him by the hand; "you surely cannot be come to breakfast with me."

"Why not," asked Tremaine, "as well as your coming to breakfast with me?"

"Deuced lucky, I can tell you, if you are; for it is past ten, and if the Doctor had not sent me over to Belford to old Qui Tam, whom I was engaged in pounding, I should have been breakfasted two hours ago."

"I'm the more fortunate," answered Tremaine; "but pray what do you mean by pounding, and who is Qui Tam?"

"Why who should it be but the attorney? His name, indeed, is Vellum, but I always call him Qui Tam. He is queer about it, but I don't care."

"But what do you mean by pounding him?" asked Tremaine.

"Oh! keeping him a little on the jaw about my brother's affairs, that he might not make that rogue Giles's will till the Rector had seen him again. The doctor, I know, would have been angry if I had told him my design, so I did it of my own head, and you must not peach. Indeed, I believe it was neck or nothing."

Tremaine was struck with this new instance of Jack's

activity in the cause of benevolence, and began to think of him with less comparative self-superiority.

"But come," said Jack, "you are as glum as if you were really hungry. I'll get you some eggs not half an hour old, for I have just took them myself; and the Doctor will be here in a moment. I hope he has succeeded for poor Molly though, and then he'll eat like a coach-horse."

Tremaine was informing him of the result, when Evelyn came in, and told them he had left Mary by the bedside of her father, who was apparently more comfortable for being reconciled, though still very anxious to know if he might not yet live.

At that instant Vellum rode by, in a pair of knee-topped boots, such as are worn by the dignitaries of the church; and his pockets were full of papers. Jack instantly darted out upon him, and from his wall told him how things were.

"You'll lose all your labour," cried Jack.

"I hope I am not too late," said the attorney, pulling up.

"Oh! but you are, though," returned Jack; and besides he has changed his mind."

"Impossible, Sir," replied Vellum: "it was but yesterday he sent me a note, which I have here in my breeches'-pocket."

At this moment Evelyn and Tremaine appeared at the porch door, and beckoned him: a call which Vellum, great as he was in the market-place at Belford, could not disobey; for he was neither more nor less than steward, and held their courts, baron and leet, for them both.

Upon being informed of the circumstances, the cautious Vellum observed it was quite impossible to doubt their honours, particularly Dr. Evelyn.

"That is," hastily proceeded the man of law, perceiving the mistake he had made, "as the Doctor has himself heard the party, as it were, *in articulo;* for without that, God forbid I should make a distinction

between two such worthy gentlemen, and, for that matter, worshipful magistrates. By the way, give me leave, 'Squire Tremaine, to congratulate you on your appearance at the last Quarter Sessions; long may you be the same ornament that your grandfather was to that great court."

Here he smiled with great self-complacency, and all the other gentlemen smiled too; which the attorney mistaking, he went on with assumed dignity: "But I crave your pardon Doctor Evelyn, although I am as sure as I am here and you are there that the old man has changed his mind, if only because you say it, and 'Squire Tremaine for that matter confirms it (bowing to both), yet you will excuse me" (bowing still lower)—

"What the devil! do you question it?" said Jack.

"Heaven forbid, I say," proceeded Vellum; "only as I received the positive instruction of the party himself, I should, I conceive, ill desire the reputation, though I say it, of being principal solicitor in such a place as Belford, and being steward to so many great gentry (bowing again) if ——" —but interrupting himself, "but I beg pardon, gentlemen; I must be minding my business, and go to the dying man."

Tremaine, glad to get rid of him, assured him they did not wish to detain him; and observed to Evelyn, as the lawyer remounted his horse, that he seemed such a fool, he thought his courts could not be safe in such hands: he felt inclined to take them from him.

"No! my dear friend, you must not commit such injustice."

"But is he not a fool?" asked Tremaine.

"By no means, professionally," said Evelyn; his caution at this moment, in not, as he says, legally believing us, demonstrates that; and if he is uncouth in general manners, it is because he has sacrificed them to professional knowledge, and has not mind enough for both. His integrity is unblemished—and depend upon it he will hold your courts as well as any, and better than most."

In about half an hour the man of law returned, and

found the friends together, listening to an account Jack was giving of a political dispute at the Hound-and-Horn club.

"He is defunct," said the man of law.

"It was sudden then after all! and Mary?" asked Evelyn.

"I left the poor damsel wailing over him, as if ——"

"He had been a better man," said Careless; "she was always a good girl."

"And the will?" questioned Tremaine.

"I shall have a right to charge the estate," observed Vellum.

"I don't understand," said Tremaine.

"For my time and trouble," returned the steward; "it was his own appointment, as I can prove—nevertheless I won't," added he, "and so I told the poor girl."

"I dare say she never thought of it," said Evelyn: "but that does not diminish your kindness, Vellum."

"Your worship is always good," replied the lawyer. "We indeed are not always so rapacious as we are thought; and for my part, I should scorn to take advantage merely because I had the power."

"Your name shall be chalked up, my old Vellum," cried Careless: "well! and the will was not made?"

"He was, as I said *in articulo*," answered Vellum, "and could not have made even a nuncupative, when I was admitted;—besides which he waved his hand when he saw me, as much as to say, get out of the room, which I thought very uncivil, after all my pains; however, I excused the ill breeding at such a moment."

"Were you with Giles when he died?" asked Evelyn.

"Why no!" answered the man of business; finding he was scarcely *compos*, and recollecting I had a couple of leases to get executed in the village, I thought I would just step out, and return again, in case the old man should resuscitate; but he was then quite gone."

"Mary Christmas, then, succeeds of course to all her father's property," said Tremaine.

"Your pardon, good Sir, for you know she is a *femme couverte;*" and he was going to explain, when Jack

told him that all was unnecessary, "for you know," said he, "Mr. Tremaine was a limb once, as well as yourself:" an observation, as well as an association, with which Mr. Tremaine seemed to be by no means flattered.

Jack added (for he was fond of having what he called a wipe at the attorney) that his two leases were lucky, as, with the will that was not made, he would have a right to charge three journies to his different employers, instead of one; an accusation which Vellum was going into some length to disclaim, when Evelyn proposed they should walk up to the little inn, and see Mary and her husband put quietly in possession.

This was instantly done.

Mary's grief, which was in truth by no means deserved by the deceased, was consoled by many of her old companions coming over to her. Some told her not to take on so, for a father who had never been a father; a thing which she would never allow, such was the natural meekness of this good creature's heart. Her older neighbours reminded her too (though they scorned to speak ill of the dead), that the will would have been made, if it had not been for the gentlemen, and that therefore, as they phrased it, she had no *right* to grieve for him. But all this, she said, could not excuse her, if she did not show duty to his memory: a point which, while we record merely her feelings upon it, we leave the village casuists to settle.

As for the rest, very little settlement was necessary; for there being no will, Christmas and his innocent wife were established at once in the inn. Tremaine arranged every thing with him as landlord, and added some fields which it was material for him to have; for all which good work he was more than rewarded, by the sight of Georgina walking arm in arm with Mary in the garden; or rather by the hearing her,—for that was the sense most gratified by the scenes which we are to record in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XL

Oh ! the world hath not so sweet a creature !
She might lie by an emp'ror's side
And command him tasks.

SHAKSPEARE.

"No, my dear Mary," said Georgina, as they walked together in the little garden, while Tremaine was passing by the hedge that divided it from the field:—"no, I do not mean to say you should not grieve; for we must feel for a father, although he may sometimes have been unkind. But you have a kind husband and many friends, and me you know at their head; for I assure you I never shall forget my old playmate."

"You have always been goodness itself, Miss," returned Mary, and she almost laid her head upon the offered shoulder of Georgina; for the poor girl had been nearly sinking under her various emotions.

"If my poor mother was alive now," said Mary with a sigh.

"You would make her very happy," replied Georgina. "But," she continued after a pause, "you have been very much obliged, I find, to Mr. Tremaine."

"They say he is very good," answered Mary, "and has a deal in his power, as for that, and would have used it for us; but he is not like Dr. Evelyn to us poor folks, for all that," added Mary.

"He will, I dare say, when he has lived longer among you," returned Miss Evelyn.

Tremaine drew his breath shortly.

"People say he is too fine to care for us, or indeed for anybody," continued Mary.

"That I am sure is a mistake," said her friend.

"If he was but younger," observed Mary, wiping away her tears, and almost smiling at the thought as she uttered it, "we have been thinking how fine it would be if such a lady as you was at Woodington!"

"Nay, that is quite nonsense," replied Miss Evelyn.

"I suppose it is," said Mary a little frightened; "but we wish it for all that, if ——"

"If what?" asked Georgina, not discouragingly.

"If he was not so cold and so solemn," answered Mary.

"You know I am married already—(Tremaine became painfully attentive)—to papa," said Georgina.

Tremaine was quiet again.

"And therefore, my good girl, let us think only of establishing you for the rest of your life, now we have saved your little fortune for you."

Now whether Miss Evelyn said this because she did not like the conversation, or did not care for it, or because she had sense and dignity enough to feel that a little innkeeper's daughter, though she had been her own playfellow till she was five years old, was not a proper confidant,—certain it is, the mild Mary felt she ought to drop the subject,—which she did; only observing, with something like distress, "I hope I have not been too bold Miss—I would rather die than you should think so!"

"Not in the least, my good Mary," said Miss Evelyn, with a smile of kindness; "but I am really more interested, just now, about your affairs, than anything else in the world."

Mary kissed her hand, and said such a speech did more good to her heart than all the fortune in the land.

Tremaine, who had begun to accuse himself of being a listener, now hastened to the gate of the garden, in order to join them. Mary blushed when she saw him, and it is not quite certain that Georgina did not blush too.

"It is only the air," said Tremaine to himself, perceiving it; for it is evident her heart is completely vacant."

"Mary is very much obliged to you, Mr. Tremaine," said Georgina, as Mary curtsied and moved off.

"For what I should have endeavoured to do, but could never have done," replied he.

"Your intentions were the same; and for one, I feel much impressed with them, for the sake of my *protégée*."

She said these last words rather falteringly, and as if she hesitated whether to add for any other sake.

In fact, Evelyn, on her first arrival in the village (for she was too much interested to stay by herself, at home), had told her of Tremaine's piece of energy, and rallied her unmercifully upon the share, he said, she had in it.

"He told me in terms," said Evelyn, "it was all to please you, and even took himself to task for it."

"That did not do away his merit," thought Georgina, and she began to regard him with more softness than she had ever yet done; so that when he found her in the garden of the little inn, he at least found her in no bad humour with himself.

"I have had an extremely anxious morning," said she, "which you have kindly helped to comfort."

"That Dr. Evelyn's daughter should be anxious where good was to be done, is not surprising," answered Tremaine; "but I know not whether I am most surprised or pleased to observe in her all her father's activity!"

"Being so active yourself!" remarked the lady, with archness.

"Active or not," replied Tremaine, "depends upon the disposition of the moment, which we sticklers for the free liberty of will assert should always decide."

"Then let us decide upon sitting down till my father comes," said Georgina; "he promised to find me here, when he had finished some village business, and I have had a hot ride."

They entered a little arbour at the end of a turf walk. It was no more than some osiers bent into arches, over which Christmas, in the days of his authorised courtship with Mary, had trained a vine, and a scarlet bean, which had just begun to flower. A bench of a single plank composed all the rest. Some roses, which bloomed, and perfumed the air close by, attracted their senses, already not undelighted.

"Confess, Mr. Tremaine," said the lady, perhaps

thinking of her father's discussion the evening before, "confess, that the simplest and most unadorned nature may sometimes be as attractive as the most polished efforts of art."

"Quite papa!" cried Tremaine.

"No! not quite, for I am too weak for argument."

Tremaine wished within himself that the Doctor sometimes had been so too.

"What I mean is," continued Georgina, "that the magnificent saloon and gilded palace of you men of refinement could not perhaps supply anything so soothing to sense as this cheap and simple scene."

"More like still," answered Tremaine; "I protest I shall be afraid of you."

"Are you then afraid of papa?"

"Oh no!—and yet—that is—I am afraid I sometimes shock his prejudices too much."

"I assure you that fear is reciprocal."

"I wish we could oftener convince one another," said Tremaine.

"Well, but we both think you improved," observed Georgina; "confess you are not half so listless as you were, and that you can even almost bear with ordinary scenes and ordinary people. An arbour of scarlet-beans, for example, instead of a magnificent conservatory."

"Agreed! in such company," answered Tremaine, with an air of gallantry, yet of sincerity, not at all displeasing to Georgina.

"That speech shall not let you off. No! I mean even if alone: if indeed," added she, pausing, "to be with one's own mind is to be alone."

"You are then, after all, fond of being alone?"

"Till I grow tired of myself," replied Georgina, with simplicity.

"I should think that could not soon be."

"It all depends upon the humour one is in, you know. There are moments when I long to dance, or ride a race, if my father would ride one too;—which he never will. There are others when I could sit still for hours, with almost no particular employment for my thoughts, and

occupied solely in the soft soothing of a reverie. It is at these times that the simplest sights and sounds in nature seem the most pleasant."

"I am afraid it is because you have never been introduced or past a winter in town. I must refuse you for a judge till you have for months been twice a week regularly at the Opera," said Tremaine.

"That will not change me," rejoined Georgina, "though the confession may lower me in your esteem."

"Nothing can," said Tremaine.

"Shall I try your sincerity?"

"Willingly."

"Why then, much as I love music, I scarce know the sound that enlivens me more than the crowing of the cock we now hear; and I have seen my father pleased in such moments as we were talking of, by listening without interruption to the mere rhythm of the dairy-maid's churn."

"No doubt he thinks them as beautiful as the tones of Viotti, or the pipe of Trammezzani," said Tremaine, ironically.

"Not so," replied Georgina; for the sounds are not to be compared, and, as mere sounds, the one far exceeds the other. But my father says it is the associations that make them so pleasing;—they are all cheerful, and indicate the habitation and business of a well-ordered family."

"Why this again is papa in petticoats," cried Tremaine, apologising at the same time for the liberty of the observation.

"I wish it were," said Miss Evelyn.

"Well! you are able advocates, I admit," added Tremaine; "but I would wager you are the only advocates that can be found for such mediocrity, or rather such monotony in happiness."

"As for mediocrity, I am persuaded no drawing-room could make me happier than at this moment;" (Tremaine looked pleased, but Georgina was thinking more of Mary than of him;) and for monotony, your favourite Madame de Staël gave me a passage the other day, which seems

too just not to be decisive on the two sides of the question."

"Do you remember it?" asked Tremaine.

"I think I do," said Georgina; "it is in her work, 'De l'Allemagne,' and is this: '*La monotonie dans la rétraite, tranquillise l'âme: La monotonie dans le grande monde, fatigue l'esprit.*' Now I am '*dans la rétraite,*' and you in the '*grande monde;*' and hence, I dare say, all the difference between us."

"Would to Heaven," said Tremaine, admiringly, but with an involuntary sigh, "that were really all."

Georgina looked surprised,—but not comprehending him, went on: "Do you know there is more than one passage in Madam de Staël that we thought applicable to you? for my father and I talk of you often.

Tremaine was more and more pleased, and found himself almost taking her hand; it is certain he gazed upon her with eyes that were not 'lack lustre,' and that knew at times well how to speak. It almost distressed her, and she was going to break up the conference.

"I wonder where my father can be all this time," said she; "there must be some mistake; I must search for him."

Tremaine entreated, before she went, that she would favour him with the passage in which he was so interested; and as his manner, though most impressive, was at the same time most respectful to woman, and never more so than at that moment, she found no difficulty in obliging him.

The passage I particularly recollect," said Georgina, "is where she talks of the necessity for the solitary man's being also an active-minded man: '*L'homme solitaire a besoin qu'une émotion intime lui tienne lieu du mouvement extérieur qui lui manque.*' Now in town, I apprehend," added Georgina, "the Opera, or, more probably, the House of Commons, may be your *mouvement extérieur;*' but as I am neither a fine lady, nor a member, I am forced to content myself with an '*émotion intime,*' and find it where papa bids me look for it, in the *simplicity* of nature!"

" She is the loveliest-minded creature in the world," said Tremaine to himself, as he delivered her to her father, and took leave of them to return to Woodington.

CHAPTER XLI.

A PORTRAIT.

I am combined by a sacred vow.
SHAKSPEARE.

RETURNED home, Woodington never appeared so lonely in the eyes of Tremaine. He passed an uneasy evening, and an uneasy morning the next day; could settle to nothing; and went to his library as he generally did, to find comfort, and as he often did, not knowing where to look for it.

His chair, which was what the upholsterers call an Indulgent (a great deal too indulgent for study), an open Cicero, a Horace, and a Shaftesbury, seemed to invite him to proceed with them where he left off;—but he did not know where he left off, and they never had so few charms.

" No," said he, " I'll none of you—I'll to the Forest of Ardennes," taking up a volume of Shakspeare; " I'll to the garden, to the woods—to the seat that looks on the most beautiful spot in England."

He meant a bench which he had lately fixed at the end of the terrace, commanding the best view of Evelyn Hall.

As he paced back through the rooms, Mary, and all that Mary, and even that old Vellum had said in the preceding morning, revived in his memory.

" I agree," said he, " (for why should I deny it?) that Belmont was a melancholy place, and that I was dying there of hyp!—I agree too, how fine it would be, if such a lady were at Woodington! for—Woodington

wants a mistress. Alas! I agree too," looking at himself in a pier glass, as he passed it, "*If I was not so old and so solemn!*—as to the age," he went on, still looking at himself, "it is not so very great! I am by no means so old as her father! and as to the solemnity—to be sure she has many notions that must change—and they *will* change," said he, flinging out of doors, and hastening to the end of the terrace.

"I will here," said he, sitting down, "enjoy all those charms of a reverie, such as that witch described,"—and he closed his eyes, only to open them now and then upon the chimnies of Evelyn. But alas! a reverie is not to be purchased, nor controlled, nor commanded; neither rank, nor riches, nor shining before men, nor wisdom in one's generation, nor in one's own eyes, nor wisdom of any sort, can bind this wayward sprite, who comes and goes at his pleasure, and flits before the charmed sense of a poor student, building his château en Espagne, fifty to one more readily than he will to oblige the king of Spain himself.

It is quite certain that Mr. Tremaine, great as he was, and using all "appliances and means to boot," could not catch the reverie he sighed for, so as to hold it for a moment. He had risen for the fourth time from the bench he was sitting on (which he said was a very uneasy bench), before he entirely gave the matter up.

"I know not why," said he, "but the plank in the scarlet-bean arbour was pleasanter than this."

He looked at it again, examined its construction, quarrelled with his carpenter, said he would have a new one, and was actually returning to the house to give orders, when, to his utter astonishment (though perhaps nothing in the world could be less astonishing), he saw the Doctor and his daughter standing before him.

To say he reddened, or looked foolish, or hesitated when he paid his compliments, would be to shock the good-breeding of which he was master;—but as certain it was, that he did not pay those compliments with his usual ease.

"I fear we break in upon your privacy," said Evelyn.

"At least most agreeably," replied he.

"We presumed," observed Miss Evelyn, "upon the permission of Monsieur Dupuis, who, when he went one way to seek you, gave us leave to go another. We asked which way you went; to which we had the satisfactory answer, 'He no know himself.'"

"From all which we suspected," said Evelyn, looking at his book, "that you were, as we find you, enacting the part of Master Touchstone in the Forest of Ardennes."

"I am much obliged to you for making me a clown, when at least I fancied myself a duke," said Tremaine.

"The resemblance, pardon me, is perhaps nearer than you are aware of. Nay, don't be angry, for it was Georgy there first pointed it out."

"Me! Oh, papa!—sure you—indeed, Mr. Tremaine—"

"I have no doubt the resemblance is very just," said Tremaine, with rather more politeness in his manner than Georgina was disposed to like.

"*Savoir*," said Evelyn; and he began to read.

"And how like you this shepherd's life, Master Touchstone? Truly, shepherd, in respect to itself it is a good life; but in respect that it is a shepherd's life, it is naught. In respect that it is solitary, I like it very well; but in respect that it is private, it is a very vile life. Now in respect it is in the fields, it pleaseth me well; but in respect it is not in court, it is tedious."

"And all this is fastened upon me by Miss Evelyn! and not Miss Evelyn's father!" observed Tremaine.

"Perhaps it lay between us both," cried the Doctor; "but you will at least allow that the portrait is a very good portrait."

Now Tremaine allowed no such thing; so to turn the conversation, he asked what had brought him the honour of their company so soon.—"Can all that *business* which employs you so much, be finished so soon in a morning?"

"We are going to Lord Bellenden's," replied Evelyn, "which is fifteen miles; he dines early, to let people get home again, and we want you to go too."

" I am not invited," returned Tremaine.

" 'Tis a public day," said Evelyn.

" And would you have me on that account attend it! —excuse me, my good friend; you little know me—I consider a public day as little less than an insult!—Who is this Lord Bellenden, that——"

" Lord Bellenden," said Evelyn, stopping him, " is a very worthy nobleman, of immense fortune, and therefore of influence—placed by the king at the head of the Riding —living, but not shutting himself up, upon his estate."

" I am going to be schooled, I see," cried Tremaine— " pray spare me."

" I will," answered the Doctor, " provided you will allow there is neither harm nor insult in such a man opening his house to *all* his neighbours, and telling them he has done so."

" What, in the newspapers!" cried Tremaine. " No! I am not proud——"

" Not in the least," retorted the Doctor, " those who ever said so wronged you unmercifully."

" I am, however, I hope, above being advertised for as a guest," said his friend. " Let us see!—'There will be public days at Bellenden House every Thursday for the next month!'"

" So says the paragraph, which, being interpreted, means, that my Lord Bellenden being very lonely, and not knowing what to do with himself in his fine house, is very willing to be diverted by any one who will take the trouble to come twenty or thirty miles to divert him."

" You forget," said Evelyn, " that he diverts as well as is diverted, and that he is as much honoured as he honours. So much for pride: *Au reste*, neighbours and families, who see one another seldom, have a pleasant opportunity of meeting under the auspices of a person of rank, power, and good-breeding; and all that promotes good neighbourhood cannot but be good in itself."

" Yes! but to be advertised for!"

" Well, are you not advertised for in town?"

" As how?"

" Whenever my lady A—, or Mrs. B—, sends a small

card to your house, not treating you with the least ceremony of compliment, not even honouring you with an invitation, but merely apprising you (gracious intimation!) that she is at home!—and yet you go for all that!"

"That is not in the papers," answered Tremaine.

"It is not always out of them," said Evelyn; "at least I have sometimes observed with a preface of—'we are authorised to say, Lady A.'s assembly is put off, or Lady B.'s is put on; or that if it rains, the Duke of D—'s breakfast will not take place at the C— Villa.'—Now what is this but advertising in the papers, or what does it want but a 'Whereas,' in large letters, to give it a place in the Hue and Cry itself?"

"You may overpower, but you cannot convince me," answered Tremaine, in a tone which shewed that though he might not be convinced, he was at least much shaken. "Yet how can I make you believe I am not proud?"

"By going," said Georgina, with a look which did more than all her father's argument; "by going, for it is quite a curricle day ———"

"But I have no curricle," replied Tremaine, "and if I had, fifteen miles driving in such heat would be insupportable."

"Your barouche, then," said Georgina, with a smile there was no withstanding.

"You drive me out of all my principles," exclaimed the proud man, acquiescingly.

As the carriage was getting ready, "You will give us places, I suppose, and I shall at least gain by it," said Evelyn.

"No you won't, for we will have no arguments," said Tremaine, "not one the whole way."

It is not above two miles from Bellenden House, and as the road turns suddenly to the left, branching off from the turnpike towards the outer gates of the park, that one of those substantial summer-houses, which our ancestors were so fond of building sixty or seventy years ago, filled up the exact corner of the two roads, so that a window to the south, and another to the west, commanded a view of every man, woman, child, horse, higgler's cart, stage, or

gentleman's coach, that proceeded from London to York, or from York to London, or from any part of that line to the seat of the Earl of Bellenden.

This summer-house had been a very fine thing in its time, and was built by old Sir Hildebrand Homestead, with a profusion of red brick, white stone copings, white pilasters, and carved cornices; and here of a summer evening, Sir Hildebrand used always to cool himself with a pipe. His son, who forty years before the time we speak of, and indeed for some years afterwards, was called young Sir Hildebrand, succeeded to the estate; and though he left off smoking, as smoking went out of fashion, yet he used the summer-house as much as his father.

This gentleman was remarkable for the most insatiable curiosity. Not a tale or an anecdote—not a marriage, a courtship, or bastardy—not a sale or mortgage of an estate—not a trial in civil court or crown court—not a dinner, or even what was eaten for dinner, within fifty miles—I might almost add, within fifty years of him, but he knew in all the exactness of verity, and could repeat with all its various readings, as he had it from different relators. And yet for the last five-and-thirty years he had never stirred from his own gate. His powers both of talking and of listening were inexhaustible, and, as we may suppose, were well exercised by the idle gossiping people in the neighbourhood, and by almost all travellers that came near the summer-house, at one or other window of which he was to be found planted generally from breakfast till dinner, which was still always at two o'clock, and from dinner till the evening closed in—when, in summer,—he always retired to bed.

The only inconvenience attending this pleasure was that, as talking is a thirsty employment, it occasioned, among the lower orders especially (who were always observed to be most kind in their communications), a considerable tax upon his ale and beer. This, however, was not minded by Mr. Jerome the butler, and to do him justice, not much more by the Baronet himself.

It may be thought, perhaps, that he had a vacant

mind, or broken down body, and that this was his mode of amusing them. But no! he had considerable reading, had studied, and seen the world when young, and had even been elected a bencher of one of the inns of court; while, on the other hand, he had never known an hour's illness from his birth to this time,—when in his seventy-sixth year, he was still hale and hearty.

Why he had retired so early, or why at all, except because it was his humour, and that an Englishman, especially if rich, has a right to his humour, never could be exactly ascertained. It was said indeed in the neighbourhood, that an early disappointment with a lady who had made another choice, (in vulgar language jilted him,) first drove him from London; when for a long time he let his beard grow, and lived in his nightcap, with no companions but his books and servants, the latter of whom were all of the male kind: for such for many years was his resentment against the sex, that not a female was admitted into his household. This however went off, and it was supposed that he might have returned to the world, and even married, had he not, as was also supposed, bound himself by a vow never to stir from his own house; while his shyness towards ladies of his own rank was never to be conquered. It was indeed confidently reported that in his sixty-fifth year he had made an offer to his cookmaid; who taking him for a conjuror, from his fondness of mathematical instruments, was afraid to accept him.

It may be supposed that a public dinner at a great man's, and that so close to him, was an occasion too agreeable to his temper to be neglected. It was in fact a sort of gala; an event to interest both himself and his whole house; who accordingly on these occasions generally assembled upon the lawn before his door, for some time before my lord's hour of dining, or the first carriage had given the signal that the company had begun to assemble. On these occasions too, he thought to give additional importance to the day by assuming a sort of costume, only known at these times. Thus, for the last twenty years, he had appeared in a white, or rather stone coloured

coat, with a pink silk lining; his grey curls were taken out of rollers, and a little bag placed on his short queue; the whole giving him an air and manner by no means other than that of a gentleman.

On these days the summer-house was abandoned, and he was generally seen attended by his butler, leaning over the gate that opened into the road, in order the better to converse with, or receive the compliments of such friends as were still left him, and who usually made a point of stopping for a few moments to shew that they were alive, and to ascertain that he was so too; a ceremony not at all less necessary in their opinion, from its being utterly unknown to whom he meant to leave his fortune.

Such conferences, particularly if there was anything beyond the very commonest topics to communicate, rendered these days the happiest in the old man's life.

This gentleman was known to Dr. Evelyn, who never came near his gate without making him happy, as Sir Hildebrand said, by telling him where he had been, and where he was going; and having some time before acquainted him with Tremaine's arrival, and seclusion at Woodington, so as to excite much of his curiosity, he knew he could not do him a greater benefit than by bringing about a visit, if visit it could be called: for Sir Hildebrand never suffered his guests, particularly if there were ladies among them, to proceed farther than the lawn, or, at most, into the summer-house.

During the mile or two before they came to Homestead Hall, Evelyn had informed Tremaine of all these particulars; "and if you have a mind to make a harmless old man very happy," said Evelyn, "you will give him a call."

"Good Heavens! for what?" exclaimed Tremaine; "are we not going to be overwhelmed enough at a great country dinner, without the addition of an old quiz, who, from your account, can scarcely derive respectability even from his age?"

"Odd fish you know are my game," replied Evelyn.

"But not mine," said Tremaine: "I am quite satisfied with your history, and have no curiosity to see the subject of it."

"I believe," retorted Evelyn, "you would be satisfied with Buffon's history of the whale, and not go to see one, if it were even to be thrown on the shores of the Humber."

"Not if it smelt like its own Greenlanders," answered Tremaine.

"Well, but Sir Hildebrand is a subject for a philosopher, and you are a philosopher; he supplies food to the mind," said Evelyn.

"As much as your whale, to the body," rejoined Tremaine; "and when you eat a bit of whale, I'll study Sir Hildebrand. I beseech you, do not let us stop;—it will be an odious waste of time."

"I have no doubt you'll employ it better with Dr. Juniper or Sir Marmaduke Crabtree at Bellenden House, for the half hour we have to spare," remarked Evelyn.

"Horrible alternative," answered Tremaine—and at that moment Georgina saying she should like so see one, of whose oddity she had heard so much, he instantly gave way, and with silent, but not inexpressive politeness, ordered the postilions to stop at Homestead gate.

"But will he admit a lady?" said Georgina.

"Not without leave first asked and obtained," replied her father.

By this time the carriage drew up, and Sir Hildebrand, who was leaning over the gate, greeted them with a bow of the last century. He was tall and spare, by no means of vulgar appearance, and there was still a quick glancing eye, which looked as if it had enjoyed better times.

"This man may be odd, but he is not a quiz," said Georgina to herself.

Though Georgina was thus amicably disposed, he shrunk back at the sight of her, and reddening, and at the same time with a constrained sort of smile, was bowing them away, when Evelyn said—"I am come to present my neighbour Mr. Tremaine and my daughter Miss Evelyn to you Sir Hildebrand."

A slight bow of acquiescence was all his shyness permitted, for in truth his eye was caught by Tremaine's gay equipage.

"I thought it was not yours," said he to Evelyn; "I think I never saw four such beautiful bays;—so well matched, so full of blood. The harness too, and the whole together, beat Lord Bute's when he first went to court on the Accession."

"An odd reception this," said Tremaine, yet seemingly not displeased.

"What is a poor damsel to do?" cried Georgina: "will he admit us or not?"

It was a question not unnatural, for Sir Hildebrand had shrunk away from the gate, and was mounting the stairs of the summer-house, looking back every now and then, as if to see if he was followed.

"You have gained much by your visit," cried Tremaine, smiling; "I wonder how this philosophy of yours will turn it to account."

"I don't understand it," said the Doctor;—when Mr. Jerome, who had been at the gate all the time, with the best bow that sixty years could muster, informed them that Sir Hildebrand would be glad to see them in the summer-house, and the lady might come in, if she pleased.

"But pray, friend, how could you find this out?" asked Evelyn, "for he has not said a word to you."

"I understand his honour's manner," answered the butler, with another bow.

"We must let every man speak in his own language," remarked Evelyn, getting out.

"You lead me like a school-boy," exclaimed Tremaine, handing Georgina; and the party followed to the summer-house. They were here agreeably surprised. A large room, or rather library, with many hundreds of books, an orrery, globes, models, maps, and all that bespoke well-educated retirement. And in one recess there was collected an assortment of the finest old porcelain.

The most surprising thing was the master, who having at first, with rather an impressive air, reached chairs for them with his own hands, immediately betook himself to one of the windows, out of which he looked for some minutes, as if no one had been within. No one spoke, so

much were they occupied with observation; when turning round, Sir Hildebrand called out, as if suddenly struck, "Two turtles and two haunches to-day, besides peaches from the new forcing-house. There ought to be a large company, but I have seen nobody but the high sheriff go by yet." Then turning suddenly to Tremaine, he said, "I knew your grandfather well. I am glad to see you; but I am sorry you shut yourself up. You have made no vow I hope. A bad thing to tempt heaven—a very bad thing, take my word for it."

Pausing a little, he added, with rather a vacant look, "I see the world, however, very well; do you know I have sometimes counted thirty-seven coaches and chaises in a day, going by this window; and I can always tell if there is any good news, before Lord Bellenden himself; for he cannot see the ribbons in the coachmen's hats."

Then assuming a wiser tone, "Let me give you a piece of advice," said he, "Mr. Tremaine: You see there a great deal of knowledge—" (pointing to his books and instruments;) "vain, if it is not useful; and not useful, if not communicated."

"Well!" continued the humorist, "only don't shut yourself up. If I dared go out of my gate, I would have better company than Jones or Dobbs."

These were afterwards explained by Evelyn to be the curate, and a neighbouring farmer, who for the last seventeen years had dined with Sir Hildebrand every Sunday; the only recreation he allowed himself, beyond the chance passengers he met with at his gate.

"But," proceeded he, "I go to see no one, and therefore no one comes to see me; there is a give and take in all things, and I do as well as I can. I am in the commission, and nobody is the securer for it: I read, and nobody is the wiser for it; I am rich, and nobody is the better for it. This is bad, very bad, Mr. Tremaine. I see there is another carriage; Lord Bellenden must be very happy; but it will cost him a deal of money, a deal of money!—Old Jones says, there is more waste in his kitchen in a month, than would support him all the year round."

Afterwards, whispering Evelyn, loud enough to be heard, however, by all; "They say he stews five hams into one turtle—and yet the estate can pay:" then observing Georgina looking at him with some pity and a great deal of kindness, he sat mute for several minutes, twisting his thumbs, like a schoolboy corrected by the glance of his master.

Evelyn eyed him with tenderness, and in pure compassion wishing to change the conversation, said he was glad to see him so well.

"Yes!" he replied, "I am pure well,—but not so happy as I was: people don't come to talk to me at the gate as they used, and nobody minds me—yet I have five thousand a year, and no one but a fourth cousin."—Then regarding Georgina with more courage than hitherto, "you say she is your daughter;—well, she is very pretty, and seems very gentle; but have a care," and whispering in Evelyn's ear, he added, "no one can trust 'em." After this, as if exhausted by the effort, he fell again into silence.

The whole party were affected, and Evelyn rose to go—"Stop," said Sir Hildebrand to Georgina—"You seem, as I said, gentle: you seem honest too, and would not say one thing and do another. I am much obliged to you for coming to see me. I never saw but one that looked so handsome and so good, and she turned out ill." Here the old man sighed. "You are not married, I perceive, for you want a ring; then unlocking a small cabinet, he took out a diamond hoop, with a ruby in the middle of it of considerable value, and fitting it on her finger, before she seemed aware of what he was about, "there," said he, "if ever you want a friend you may come again." After which bowing to them all, he said, "I think I have counted all the carriages that have gone by, and yours will be the fourth."

Both Evelyn and Tremaine thought it was time to leave the poor Baronet to himself; and Georgina having looked at her father, and perceiving that he wished her to accept the ring, would have returned her thanks; but she was not only very much affected, but the giver hung

his head in even sheepish distress, and begged her so awkwardly to say nothing about it, that she was silent—contenting herself with a courtesy and a look, which was not thrown away upon Sir Hildebrand, much less upon Tremaine, who translated that look into ten thousand softnesses, every one of them winding into his own heart.—The Baronet himself seemed roused by it, for he immediately said, with an air of something like dignity, "If you are going, at least let me have the honour of assisting you," and actually gave his hand to her with a manner which a Lord Chamberlain need not have blushed at. Georgina could not help pressing it as he put her into the carriage;—which made him falter and blush, so as to disable him from saying a word to his male guests: and many were the speculations from the windows of the hall, and the walls of the court-yard, which were crowded with his servants and tenants, as Tremaine and his friends drove off to Bellenden House.

The party were for many minutes silent after leaving Homestead. Georgina was affected, even to tears, with what she had seen; Evelyn was much impressed, and Tremaine thoughtful: so that Lord Bellenden's lodges were almost in sight before the train of reflection was broken. At length Evelyn could not help exclaiming, "a noble mind seems here o'erthrown."

"I own I expected something very different," said Tremaine, with emotion.

"Poor fellow!" cried Georgina, as she looked at her ring, and could not help a tear falling upon it, which she was unwilling to wipe away. "I will keep it for his sake."

The emotion did not make either of her companions less thoughtful.

"You see, my friend," said Evelyn with a serious air, "what it is, as this poor gentleman observed, to tempt heaven. It is evident that the report of the neighbourhood is true; and that in a temporary fit of disgust, perhaps of madness, from disappointment, he bound himself to this way of life by a vow. The consequence is, that, by brooding over in solitude what he might

have dissipated by business, he nursed himself into a humorist, and has led a useless, and, I should think, an unhappy life."

"The latter does not appear," said Tremaine, rousing; "he seems to have been social at least at his gate: and, as long as he had plenty of gossip, not to have been unhappy."

"Granting that," replied the Doctor, "to what indeed, as you sometimes say, is a man of education reduced, when, to count the stage-coaches, or busy one's self about another man's kitchen, has become, perhaps, a serious employment?"

"May he not, from your own theory," said Tremaine, "be happy?"

"If he may," answered Evelyn, "which perhaps I ought not to deny, it at least proves the soundness of the theory itself; for you see his solitude, unoccupied as it is, forces him upon the world, as far as he can mix in it, for the only relief he enjoys,—and he is busy about his fellow men, though only passengers in a post-chaise, whom he does not even know."

Tremaine was about to reply, when, as they had now long passed the lodges, Lord Bellenden's fine place opened upon their view, and the conversation stopped.

CHAPTER XLII.

AN EXCLUSIVE.

> If the quick fire of youth light not your mind,
> You are no maiden, but a monument.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

THE visit to Homestead had deranged part of the plan of our guests—which was to have a walk in the beautiful grounds before dinner, and afterwards to dress. Only the latter could be effected; and the whole company had

nearly assembled in the saloon by the time they presented themselves.

Lady Bellenden, who regarded Georgina with both tenderness and esteem, received her with the most affectionate politeness—introducing her to her daughter Lady Gertrude Bellenden's particular attentions; and adding, as she put their hands together, "How I wish this moment of introduction between you two may lead to a friendship hereafter."

Each of the young ladies, thus called upon, surveyed the other; calculating, according to the quickness of eye or penetration of judgment that either was endowed with, how far this amiable wish might be realized. But whether from the restraint which the sudden and public expression of it imposed, or from the want of sufficient experience and discrimination in the youthful parties, neither young lady discovered much that tended to raise hopes of its accomplishment.

Lady Gertrude was in her twenty-first year; of uncommon beauty of face, which was absolutely brilliant with the finest white and red in the world. She was tall and graceful, but there was no particularity of air, manner, or countenance, that spoke even after acquaintance, as if there was much within, except a very high idea of her own consequence.

Her mother, who had long been in bad health, had been residing some years on the Continent; and these were the most critical years of Lady Gertrude's life; for she had been left during that whole period under the care of her aunt, the Duchess of Mandeville, who was considered the very mirror of good-breeding by the most highly finished gentlewomen of the age. All the world gave praise to this excellent aunt, for having added to the cares and anxieties which three daughters of her own occasioned, by undertaking the education of another young female out of pure kindness to her sick sister.

As for the education, it was as perfect as the best masters, for personal, and the very best French (or rather Franco-Italian) governess, for mental accomplishments, could make it. The peculiar province of the Duchess

was to form the manners, the *ton de société, les usages;* and in this she was universally acknowledged to shine an unrivalled Queen, whom all endeavoured to please, study, and imitate.

With these advantages Lady Gertrude could not fail to profit much; and everybody was anxious to know, before she was presented, how she would come out. She came out, at once, and in full maturity of fastidiousness, a finished *Exclusive.*

The Duchess, in fact, was the most refined of women. Refinement was her favourite study—her favourite word. It was what she always recommended, always preached, and always practised; and although to her bitter disappointment her own daughters were more disposed to imitate their father, whose habits were rather those of a country gentleman than one at the head of the Peerage, she found consolation in the aptitude of her niece to follow all her precepts, and all her example.

Such was the being, for whom, in her maternal solicitude, the amiable, as well as sensible Lady Bellenden, wished to acquire a friend in Georgina. Such the appearance and manners, which Georgina was requested to love.

Now, though Miss Evelyn had the most perfect *natural* good-breeding that ever adorned a daughter of nature, and had none of the ungraceful shyness which belongs to rusticity, yet she had certain notions of certain things, which she sometimes found *inconveniently* serious. On the present occasion, she had been desired by a woman of the first consequence in her circle,—one to whom she always looked up with the sincerest esteem, her own known friend, and at this time her hostess,—to love her daughter as a friend. This was a word which, to her, always sounded most serious, as well as most sweet; insomuch that she could no more think of trifling with herself in chusing a friend, than if she had been called upon to chuse a husband. In point of fact, she had never had the opportunity of chusing or even thinking of one or the other; for her father had so engrossed,

so filled her mind, and was himself so absolutely devoted to her, that he had hitherto supplied the place of both. Yet she had often thought a friend of her own sex, and about her own age, would be very delightful as well as very natural; and, in the recesses of her boudoir, or in a lonely walk, she had sometimes yielded to the most natural wish of a sensible heart—the wish for a companion that could partake, with equality of interest, her amusements, her cares, and her inmost secrets.

When, therefore, Lady Bellenden uttered her impressive wish, it conjured up a train of ideas long pondered and cherished by Georgina, of the deepest interest to her mind, and of the very utmost importance to her happiness. She surveyed Lady Gertrude as a being who might influence her future life,—in whom she was to read, as in a book, all those happy reciprocities of sentiment, which her own pure heart and warm fancy had lately been so pleased to meditate. No wonder, then, that she looked embarrassed with the force of an emotion which no one, and least of all, Lady Gertrude, could understand; and which, indeed, was the very opposite to any by which Lady Gertrude herself felt she could be influenced.

The *abord* of the two ladies was, therefore, very different; and, it must be owned, with all our partiality to Georgina, that, in the eyes of some of the bye-standers, *refinement*, in this instance, might seem to have the advantage over *simplicity*. It was not that there was any intrinsic superiority, even of manner, on the part of Lady Gertrude: it was simply that she was unmoved, while Miss Evelyn seemed labouring with something which, spite of herself, was restrained. She meant to be a great deal more than civil, yet kindness would not flow; while Lady Gertrude, who did not even intend much civility, felt no kindness at all.

While their hands were yet together, and Lady Bellenden had scarcely withdrawn her's, Lady Gertrude, with a very short and abrupt courtesy, said in a low voice, and with most fashionable nonchalance, "My

mother is very good"—and when Georgina said something about her being always so, and that this was not the least instance of it, she replied, adjusting her tucker, "We dressed in such a hurry, I really don't know whether I'm dressed or not."

The conversation there languished, and would perhaps have died away altogether, had not Georgina, after surveying her new friend rather anxiously, observed, by way of something to say, upon the largeness of the company that was assembled. Lady Gertrude immediately applied to her eye-glass, and, after surveying them, exclaimed, "They seem a strange heterogeneous set, as they always are upon these occasions; but I suppose you know them all, Miss Evelyn—in which you have the advantage, for I really am not acquainted with one in the room except Mr. Tremaine,—who is always so excessively fine, there's no knowing whether one knows him or not. I believe you came with him. They say he is worse than ever."

The glass was then directed exclusively to Tremaine; and one or two gentlemen approaching with their wives and daughters, to salute this daughter of the house, she replied to their civilities with a most freezing, and scarcely perceptible bend of the head, and, leaving both them and her new friend, made her way to that part of the room where Tremaine was engaged in conversation with Lord Bellenden.

CHAPTER XLIII.

HALF AN HOUR BEFORE DINNER.

All the men and women merely players.
SHAKSPEARE.

As there was nothing in a young lady joining even a *tête-à-tête*, of which her father formed one of the parties, Lady Gertrude thus presented herself to Tremaine's notice without the smallest breach of decorum, or even

derogation to her dignity; so that she put her arm within her father's with the prettiest air of independence and apathy imaginable, without seeming to notice who was his companion, except, indeed, that she was ready to receive any notice that he might take of her. But to say truth, the gentleman was her equal at this play; for though he was in fact well known to her, and had not seen her for eighteen months, he only made her the slightest inclination (for it could not be called a bow), in which his chin was in fact the only part of the body that moved. He then instantly pushed through the row of 'squires and clergymen that intercepted his way, till he found himself by the side of Georgina, who was listening with all meekness to the protecting speeches of an exceedingly great lady indeed.

This was a high-bred dame, who had arrived a few minutes before in a coach and six. Stopping at Boroughbridge, in her way to Lancashire, she had heard that Lord Bellenden, with whom she was well acquainted, had a public day, and had sent to say she would pay him a visit, if Lady Bellenden would admit her in a traveller's dishabille. Lady Bellenden had of course returned a proper compliment, and the dishabille she appeared in was a richly trimmed silk pelisse, while her hair was adorned with a considerable number of diamonds, the fruits to her father of many German, and other foreign missions, and which she often boasted could purchase the whole dominion of many a German sovereign.

To this lady, Georgina had been introduced by Lady Bellenden, when the latter found, to her very great vexation, that Lady Gertrude had abandoned her almost in the moment of her introduction. She therefore presented Georgina to her guest with more than common earnestness, as one of her most favourite young friends, and her name alone informed Mrs. Neville, who was not unmindful of these matters, that she was of one of the oldest families, not merely in the county, but in England itself. This and a countenance and manner that had the art of fixing high and low in their favour, the moment they were beheld, and were not thrown away upon Mrs.

Neville (who was what is called an exceedingly clever woman), drew down from her very voluble offers of any thing she could do (and she could do a great deal), to make London or Belvidere Castle agreeable to her, if ever she came to *her* part of the world.

Georgina was replying with as much civility as she could muster, where her mind was not fixed (for in truth she was thinking and wondering at Lady Gertrude still), when Tremaine joined them.

"Good heavens! Mr. Tremaine!" said Mrs. Neville, "you here!—we thought you had been dead and buried above a year ago, in Northamptonshire."

Tremaine hardly made a salute of recognition to Mrs. Neville, though they had been so long separated.

"I have been inviting Miss Evelyn to Belvidere," continued Mrs. Neville, not seeming to notice his coldness, "and, if she will come to the assizes, could promise her something gay: our rooms will be more magnificent than ever. But I am this moment under considerable anxiety."

"None of the Misses Neville are ill, I hope," said Tremaine, with indifference, "I don't see them here."

"Oh, no! I'm only afraid that Marshall, whom I always bring down to dress my hair, cannot set out in time, so as to be at the assizes the first day."

"That would be dreadful!" said Tremaine, and he turned away with evident contempt.

At this moment he was met by Miss Lyttleton, the lady whom we mentioned in a former chapter, as having excited in him inextinguishable dislike, from certain masculine tastes, which had made him confer upon her the title of the man woman. He started when he saw, or rather when he resolved *not* to see, her broad hand stretched out, and inviting his to a grasp, which he declined encountering. He bowed and endeavoured to pass on.

"Why, what can be the matter with the man?" cried the surprised female; "do you think I'm a bear, and would hug you to death?"

"He is not quite sure," observed Mrs. Neville, who had seen the rencontre.

"That is so like *you*," returned Miss Lyttleton; "but really I will be obliged to you if you can tell me what has come to him, for he has cut me for the last two years most decidedly."

"He has begun, I think, to cut me too," rejoined Mrs. Neville; "but we must let spoilt children have their own way, for it is too much trouble to attempt to correct them."

"But I really used to like the fellow," continued Miss Lyttleton. "Well, I hope I shall find somebody else of my acquaintance, for I cannot do without a man to flirt with, or laugh at, and my mother has left me here with Lady Bellenden for three days;—only think what a bore!"

Then eyeing Georgina through her glass, "By the way," she proceeded, "you seem to have got a pretty young thing there with you. Do introduce me, will you?"

As this could not be refused, the ceremony was instantly performed, and while she shook, or rather twisted Georgina's slender wrist, "I assure you," she exclaimed, "I like a pretty girl, almost as well as a pretty fellow. By the way, I don't at all like those curls of yours; why don't you crop as close as I do?—Mrs. Neville, how do you like my new crop?"

At this she bent down her head to show how entirely she had stript a poll of strong black hair of every thing like ornament, or a possibility of being ornamented. Mrs. Neville said, that to punish her she would put her into a cap.

"Odious!" she returned. "I hate all caps but a hunting cap. They make one look so like a woman! But I declare there's Tremaine again—I must go and plague him:" and she immediately flew off.

Mrs. Neville, turning to Georgina, smiled to observe her astonishment. "You are quite struck, I perceive," said she.

"Why, I own she is at least extraordinary," answered Georgina. "May I ask more particularly who and what she is?"

"I should say," replied Mrs. Neville, "that she was one of my protegées, did she not soar so infinitely above all protection. She is certainly eccentric, but I really believe there is no harm in her." She then proceeded to inform Georgina, that Miss Lyttleton was the daughter of a good-natured country gentleman in the neighbourhood, who, with an indolent mother, had allowed her to do just as she pleased; and that she had pleased always to affect the man, instead of the woman. This, she added, had, on more occasions than one, been the means of getting her into scrapes, from which she had generally extricated herself by being the first to laugh at them, and by availing herself of a sort of privilege of saying and doing whatever it came into her head to say or do.

This little account was interrupted by the approach of Lady Gertrude; who, perceiving Mrs. Neville, came up to that lady with something like pleasure, and, shaking hands with her, exclaimed, "O! I am so glad to see you here; it is really quite shocking to have no one to speak to!"

"Is this to be my friend?" said Georgina to herself.

The lady went on, "Oh! do pray let me sit by you at dinner, my dear Mrs. Neville. By the way, how did you come?—did you know this was one of my father's public days?" surveying her dress.

"Oh! don't look at me," said Mrs. Neville, for I am merely *en voyageuse*, and if it were not for a few diamonds that my woman got at for me, I should not be fit to be seen. However, I see you've scarcely any body here."

"Oh no! nothing but parsons and parsons' daughters," said Lady Gertrude, sotto voce.

"My friend!" observed Georgina again to herself.

"How you overlook merit!" replied Mrs. Neville—"don't you see Mr. Horton?"

"Still worse!" remarked Lady Gertrude; "an honest downright Yorkshire 'squire might do; but a 'squire whose head is turned merely because he belongs to one of the lower club-houses in St. James's Street, is quite unbearable."

"Well, then," cried Mrs. Neville, "I will now really give you joy, for, if I mistake not, here come two admirers of yours."

"I protest, and so they do," said Lady Gertrude, eyeing them through her glass.

These were no less persons than the Lord St. Clair, and the still greater Beau of whom such honourable mention has been made in a former chapter. Seeing Mrs. Neville and Lady Gertrude, they instantly joined them; the Beau, upon the same principle as Lady Gertrude herself had sought Mrs. Neville, and for the rest of the interval, till dinner was announced, the group seemed quite happy, if Lady Gertrude's happiness was not a little alloyed by the attentions which St. Clair paid to his old acquaintance and relation Georgina, and by the total neglect of Tremaine. For this, however, she was amply compensated by the Beau, to whom she gave the same *carte du pays* as she had given to Mrs. Neville, and who finding from her that Georgina was the daughter of a country parson, scarcely vouchsafed to look at her: and having agreed to sit all together, and, as the Beau said, to let the natives take care of themselves, (which was thought very witty by Mrs. Neville and Lady Gertrude,) they adjourned, on a summons, to the dining-room, where about thirty persons of both sexes sat down.

CHAPTER XLIV

PRECEDENCY.

> You know your own degrees; sit down; at first
> And last, a hearty welcome.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

It was not without difficulty that the guests were arranged; since, in addition to country precedency, (a point infinitely too nice for the best heraldry to settle,) the wish of the above honourable party to sit together, threw considerable embarrassment in the way. The place of Lord St. Clair, as first in rank, decided itself, and he was seated by Lady Bellenden, at her right hand, without opposition. Mrs. Neville seated herself in the chair next to him; Mr. Beaumont was going to take Lady Bellenden's left hand; and Lady Gertrude next to him; and thus all would have been quietly and comfortably arranged. But unforeseen, though insuperable impediments arose on the part of Sir Marmaduke Crabtree, and not only of Lady Crabtree, but Lady Grojam, Lady Mayfield, and Lady Bluemantle; the three first, wives of Baronets; the last only of a Knight, but that Knight the High Sheriff himself. All these high dames had, in their way, just as high notions of their own consequence as Mrs. Neville; and as the latter had no title, they were by no means disposed to yield their rank.

Sir Marmaduke began the attack by immediately seizing the Beau's chair, just as he was going to sit down. He owed it, he thought, to Yorkshire, to his own ancient Baronetcy, and to his hoped-for Peerage, not to give way to a man, whom, however well received in the very best circles in town, he looked down upon as

greatly his inferior, particularly in the country, and most of all in Yorkshire.

"By your leave, Mr. Beaumont," said Sir Marmaduke, "I have sat at this lady's left hand, any time these twenty years, upon these occasions, and I hope she will not order me away from her now."

Mr. Beaumont instantly yielded, and, to do him justice, with very good grace.

"If she did," added Sir Marmaduke, sitting down, and leering at his wife, as he said it, "I *must* obey, for everybody knows I am under petticoat government."

Now as everybody knew that Lady Crabtree had in fact what is called a very bad time of it as a wife, this was considered an exceeding good joke of Sir Marmaduke's. It was laughed at accordingly by Mr. Placid, who, after attempting a seat higher up the table than he had a right to, was regularly giving way to every one who claimed a chair above him, until he had reached the bottom; catching the joke, however, in its progress as it went.

Sir Marmaduke having disposed of himself, there still remained the female difficulties above mentioned; for the three Baronets' ladies, and Lady Bluemantle, all remained standing—not choosing to place themselves while Mrs. Neville was actually seated above them. All, however, agreed that Mrs. High Sheriff, though only a knight's lady, was to have the precedency.

"My dear Lady Bluemantle," cried they all in a voice, "the thing is quite decided."

"Perhaps so," said Lady Bluemantle, "but where am I to sit?" refusing the chair she was next to, and looking significantly at the seated Mrs. Neville.

Lady Bellenden appeared distressed, and said, "Mrs. High Sheriff, a thousand pardons, you are certainly in your wrong place; Gertrude, my dear, let Lady Bluemantle have your chair."

But, unfortunately, this being on the left hand, was a compromise by no means agreeable to Mrs. High Sheriff, who still kept looking at Mrs. Neville. That superior

lady, who had affected to be talking to Lord St. Clair, but who saw the whole contest from the first, had in fact wished to keep her seat, both because she wished to be next St. Clair, and was too proud to yield it to persons, who, though they ranked before her in title, did not, as she knew, come near her in real consequence, and whom, in fact, she looked upon as mighty ordinary people. But perceiving that she was occasioning embarrassment to Lady Bellenden, and that she could easily turn the ill-breeding of which she might be accused upon her rivals, she with admirable presence of mind started up, exclaiming, "Dear me, ladies, I have a million of pardons to beg; pray, Lady Bellenden, excuse me; I have quite forgot myself; I really thought I was in my own county." Then insisting upon placing Lady Bluemantle in the chair she resigned, she observed, with a laugh, that titles were really now become so common, that a plain gentlewoman never could tell whereabouts she was.

Miss Lyttleton here proposed a side-table, the fun of which she said she should like of all things; adding she was sure she should prove an excellent toast-master.

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Neville, "Lady Gertrude will make room for me; or, what may be better still, suppose we all go to the bottom of the table; Lord Bellenden will, I hope, be glad to receive us." At these words moving downwards, she was followed by Lady Gertrude and Mr. Beaumont, who said it was an excellent plan; and having deranged the whole settlement in Lord Bellenden's neighbourhood, the Baronet ladies having agreed upon their seniorities at the upper end, all was harmony, and the dinner commenced.

CHAPTER XLV.

POLITE CONVERSATION.

Our court, you know, is haunted with a refined traveller of Spain.
SHAKSPEARE.

"ADMIRABLY carried!" said Tremaine to Géorgina, by whom he had seated himself about the middle of the table, after having observed the whole contest with more than usual interest. "The Empress Catherine could not have settled it better had she condescended to squabble about such a thing."

"Pray, Sir, did you know anything about the Empress Catherine?" asked a gentleman who sat opposite, and happened to hear him.

"Not personally," answered Tremaine, rather surprised at the abruptness of the stranger.

"I knew her, I may say intimately," replied the gentleman, "and all her ministers, generals, and ladies."

Tremaine bowed with great distance of manner; then, turning to Georgina, began to do the honours of that part of the table, wondering who this stranger was, who was so familiarly disposed.

"I had letters," continued the stranger, not allowing Tremaine to escape, "from old Kaunitz, to whom I had been recommended by the ministry here, which gave me the greatest facilities at the court of St. Petersburgh."

"I dare say, Sir," answered Tremaine coldly.

"My first rencontre with Prince Kaunitz," continued the gentleman with intrepid vivacity, "was remarkable—and I will relate it if you please."

"Whether I please or not, it seems," said Tremaine, in a low voice. The stranger then sending away his plate went on thus: "Lord R. (then Mr. R.) and

myself agreed to ride into Vienna; it was the first time we were there; I visited it several times afterwards, both on my return from Berlin and from Poland."

"Do you know this person?" said Tremaine to Evelyn.

"Not I," answered the Doctor, "but he seems amusing."

"Amusing!" cried Tremaine.

"Hear him," said the Doctor.

"Well," proceeded the traveller, "Lord R. (then Mr. R.) and I resolved to ride into Vienna on post-horses. Lord R. was then young, handsome, and gay, and perhaps the greatest beau of his age. He wore red heels to his boots, and gilt spurs—had on a gold-laced riding coat and hat, a couteau de chasse by his side, and a long hunter's whip in his hand."

"That's just like the picture of my father," said Sir Marmaduke; adding in a low voice to Lady Bellenden, "who the devil is this odd gentleman?"

"Lady Bellenden informed him it was Sir William Wagstaff, a great author and traveller, who had brought letters of introduction to Lord Bellenden, in his way to the North. Some fish stopped the progress of the story—which the company thought was lost; when Mr. Placid, who had been very attentive, said—"Pray, Sir, go on; what you were relating was very entertaining."

"Sir, you do me honour," resumed the stranger; and immediately addressing himself to him, continued: "well, we came in at a canter, preceded by an avant-courier, and attended by two English grooms and two French valets, all on horseback: and whom should we meet but Prince Kaunitz taking an airing in his coach and six."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Placid.

"He was struck with the cavalcade, and presuming that some great person—possibly a crowned head, or what perhaps interested him as much at least—some great ambassador—was arriving, he put his head out of his coach window, and made us a low bow; and, clasping

his hands in an intreating manner, exclaimed, 'Monsieur —oserai-je vous demander, qui est-ce qui arrive?' My Lord R. (then Mr. R.) immediately reined up his horse, and pulling off his hat in a very chivalrous manner, with his right hand on his breast, and a low bow, replied, 'Monsieur, c'est moi.' The astonished prince, overwhelmed with the liberty he had taken, shrunk back in his coach, with a long-drawn exclamation of 'Ah!' —— which none of this company, I apprehend, if they have not been abroad, can appreciate."

"It is a delightful story," said Mr. Placid. "Pray, Sir, did nothing else pass?"

"What a parasite!" observed Tremaine to Evelyn.

"The gentleman does not think so," answered Evelyn.

The gentleman went on—"Why yes, we were that very evening presented to Prince Kaunitz at his assembly, and, to his surprise, he found in Lord R. the gentleman whom he had taken for a foreign ambassador."

"I never heard any thing more entertaining," said Mr. Placid.

Somebody now mentioning a particular name, it immediately caught the traveller's ear, as belonging to an author of some notoriety from a northern kingdom, who was a traveller too, but who rested his fame upon very extensive works in history and moral science.

The stranger asked aloud if that was the man who wrote the history of ———? Now it happened that, at that moment, the very identical author of that very history, who had been brought to Lord Bellenden's dinner by a neighbouring dean, was engaged with Mrs. Neville in a disquisition upon geology, from which that lady seemed very much to wish to be released. When, therefore, the above speech of the traveller was uttered, Lord Bellenden became anxious, least so critical a question might disturb the harmony of his table, by involving the two authors in a personal contest: and in order to prevent all danger, at least as it might arise from ignorance, he instantly interposed by observing, "I perceive, Sir William, you know that gentleman only by reputation, for I have the honour of having him close by me.

I have been faulty in not presenting two eminent persons to each other—Dr. M'Ginnis, give me leave to introduce Sir William Wagstaff to you."

This good-nature on the part of Lord Bellenden met with a strange return; for our traveller, (whether from jealousy, a real fit of absence, or some infatuation,) after returning the profound bow which the Scotch Doctor made him, exclaimed, as one who was thinking aloud, "A strange rencontre! it is very well I did not go any farther." Lord Bellenden was in consternation at this speech; particularly as he observed the Doctor red from ear to ear with resentment, and about to make a thundering reply; when the traveller, with probably greater presence of mind than strict good faith, perceiving he had got into a scrape, disarmed the Doctor in a moment by observing, "My dear Sir, I have made you a very awkward speech, but you know there are two ways of construing it—favourably and unfavourably. I will only put it to your own knowledge of good breeding, in which sense I could have meant it."

"Oh, my dear Sir," answered the mollified Doctor, bowing with dignified humility—"I am convinced how a person of your figure could alone have meant it; and indeed, as you vary justly observe, it would have been vary awkward for your humble servant, (though it has hay-pened to me before now, turning to Lord Bellenden and Mrs. Neville,) to have heard my own works praised before my face."

This speech entirely cured the fears of the good-natured Lord Bellenden,—who, however, afterwards declared he should have desired no better entertainment than to have seen the two authors cut up each other; and Mr. Beaumont observed gravely to the Doctor, that really so great a reputation must sometimes be inconvenient; to which the Doctor modestly assented.

This little episode being over, the business of dinner went on with earnestness, and many were the praises of the venison, and turtle, the grapes, the pines, and the peaches which were demolished.

"I wish my mother would go," said Lady Gertrude,

yawning; "she thinks it so civil to stay with these people."

"Why to be sure," answered Mrs. Neville; "do you think, with all her rectitude (and to be sure nobody has more), she does not know what she is about? or your father there, good dear man! would he do all this in the county for nothing? By the bye, how old is your brother?"

"Who, Norburn? twenty—nineteen—I really don't know, and don't care—I really am so stupid, I don't know what I am about, or what I am saying."

"Forgive me, my dear, if on such an occasion you ought to know both the one and the other," replied Mrs. Neville.—"We who come in upon a popular election, where there are a great many long purses, owing to that hideous commerce, are forced to study, and therefore are able to give a lesson."

The signal so much wished for by Lady Gertrude was now given by the Countess; and the ladies retired in the same order that had been settled at dinner; but Mrs. Neville stayed behind every one, to go out arm in arm with her dear Lady Gertrude, who, as the daughter of the house, retired last. As soon as the door was closed, Lord Bellenden took the head of the table, and was followed without ceremony, by Mr. Beaumont, who did not much like his quarters, now there was neither the host nor the host's daughter to enliven him.

And now Dr. M'Ginnis prepared his mighty spirit, and hoped the wished-for opportunity was come, when he might display those powers of ratiocination, and that fund of information, which he seemed peculiarly to have treasured up for occasions of this sort. And now the mo t accomplished of travellers revolved in his mind all his magazines of anecdote and egotism, sighing for that fortunate question, or opportune remark, which might unlock the ample store; and now Mr. Beaumont began to look round in quest of food for his favourite amusement of quizzing;—in short, the health of the king was given, the signal for general conversation was thrown out, and every man's heart beat high with expectation:

save only Tremaine's, which had alone felt pleasure while he found himself near to Georgina, and which, now she was gone, gave itself up to the disgust which preyed upon it, from the folly or the vice which he attributed to every one of his neighbours,—always excepted the master of the feast, and Evelyn, to whom he clung with more than usual attachment.

But the removal of Lord Bellenden to the head of the table was rather a damper to Dr. M'Ginnis's hopes, as he by that means was deprived of his most illustrious auditor —the man, whom, being master of the house, he most wished to please: for it was a very good house,—the company assembled in it very good company, and the table which adorned it a very good table; in short, it was a house which in all respects the Doctor had no objection to visit again.

Soon, however, he was relieved; for a difference of opinion had already begun to arise at the upper end of the table, in consequence of a warm eulogy of the traveller upon the Empress Elizabeth, for abolishing capital punishments in her dominions,—accompanied by a censure, in no very measured terms, of the sanguinary nature of the English law. This was replied to by Lord Bellenden himself,—who, as a senator, and perhaps as chairman of sessions, where he so worthily presided, thought it right to defend the policy of his country.

Evelyn, who had hitherto been a silent observer, but who loved conversation, ranged himself on the side of Lord Bellenden; while Beaumont, whether he thought it not fair for two to fall upon one, or that he might be better able to draw out the ridiculous, by an affected support, warmly took the part of the traveller.

The Doctor saw and heard all this with envious eyes and ears, and began to ponder his misfortune in being placed so *hors de combat*, or, what was worse, in combat with Mr. Placid, who gave no scope whatever to his dialectic powers. In this emergency, some assertion of the traveller in respect to the great King of Prussia staggered the noble host, particularly as Evelyn said it was a good argument, if the fact were true; and all he

had to do was to doubt the fact, until better informed. Appeal was made to Tremaine, as having been at Berlin, but he protested the King of Prussia had been so long dead when he was there, that he could say nothing with accuracy on the subject. It was then that the Doctor's good star presided, for Lord Bellenden recollecting he had travelled many years before, and had seen the great Frederick alive, determined to appeal to him, which he accordingly did in a voice quite loud enough to be heard. The Doctor felt great pleasure at being thus appealed to; but though Lord Bellenden's language were as clear as his lungs were good, he nevertheless protested, with many apologies, that he hay-pened to be so very deef that day with a cauld, that he had not the honour of being able to make oot his lordship's quastion.

"Suppose you come among us?" said Lord Bellenden; "we can make room for you."

"Weellingly, my Lord," answered the delighted Doctor; and then with his napkin and dessert plate in his hand, he bade adieu to his more ordinary neighbours, to follow fortune in a higher circle.

The question was, whether Frederick the Great had not *imitated* the example of Elizabeth.

"I suppose," said the Doctor, with a grave and wise air, as becoming one who had been chosen a referee, "ye all know he was called *Le Roi philosophe et guerrier?*"

"To be sure we do," answered the traveller, "who does not?"

"I confess I did not," said Mr. Beaumont, with great seriousness; "I should be glad to hear Dr. M'Ginnis."

"Sir, you do me great honour," returned the Doctor, bowing; "and, Sir," turning to the traveller, "you will never airgu if you hurry thengs; you are too raypid by half."

"I am not arguing," replied the traveller, "I am only advancing a fact which you cannot deny: if you do, I only refer you to Baron Reisbach's account of Frederick the Great."

"Sir," rejoined the historian, "it is not I that am to be referred to any account of a man whose life I have

made it my *bee*siness to study; but the theng lies much deeper; ye are upon the nature of laws, and as I collacted where I sat, upon cay-pital punishments."

"I thought you were so deaf, you could not hear?" said Sir Marmaduke.

The Doctor looked adust, but Mr. Beaumont gravely observed, he knew from experience, that it was the nature of deafness to hear at one time and not at another.

"I thank ye Sir, again," said the Doctor; "ye have explained it vary philosophically."

"But the King of Prussia," again cried the traveller, with increased eagerness.

"We are not yet ripe for him," answered the phlegmatic jurisconsult; "a mere fact will do nothing, tell ye have sattled the whole theory and nature of laws in general. I presume you have never read Ulpian or Papinian—"

"No! thank Heaven!" said the traveller, quite vexed.

"And yet no one," replied the Doctor, unmoved, "need thank Heaven for his own ignorance;" at which many of the company laughed, to the annoyance of the traveller. "Perhaps," continued the Doctor, enjoying his advantage, "ye have not canvassed the laws of the twelve tables, foonded upon those of Solon, and sent for express from Rome to Athens. But ye possibly have heard of Draco?"

"This is quite unbearable," groaned the traveller.

"Depend upon it, he cannot contradict your fact," whispered Mr. Beaumont, encouraging him.

"When my gude Lord Bellenden and this gude company," continued the doctor, "shall have heard the end of my airgument . . . . . ."

"I own I have not heard the beginning of it," said Lord Bellenden; to which Sir Marmaduke added, it was a damned dry argument, and desired they would push about the bottle.

"Shall we go to the ladies?" asked Tremaine, almost dead with ennui.

"They have not sent for us," said Lord Bellenden.

"My good Doctor," said Lord Bellenden, all we want to know is, whether the King of Prussia *imitated* the example of the Empress Elizabeth, as Sir William Wagstaff says, (and I venture to deny,) in abolishing capital punishments."

"Your Lordship is parfectly corract," returned the Doctor.

"Impossible!" ejaculated the traveller, "I will shew it you in Baron Reisbach's eulogy, and it was always so held when I was at Berlin; I cannot be mistaken. O! if I had but a Reisbach!"

I do not exactly deny or affirm anything," replied the Doctor, not willing to hazard himself as to the fact; "but only that he did not *eemitate* Eleezabeth."

This is too much, thought Tremaine, and jumping on his legs, fairly walked through a garden door, to recover himself from a disgust no longer bearable.

Not so Mr. Beaumont, who rather enjoyed the scene. "I think your discrimination is perfectly just," cried he to Dr. M'Ginnis, "and I own I come over to you."

"I thought you would," observed the Doctor, looking at Lord Bellenden for approbation.

Lord Bellenden was however too just to accept of such doubtful assistance, and moreover not very much delighted with his auxiliary; he therefore begged him to say candidly, as far as he knew, whether Frederick did or did not enact the abolition.

"To say as far as I know upon any subject," said the historian with great dignity, "would be to say a great deal."

"Then out with it all at once," cried Sir Marmaduke, filling his glass.

"Heaven forbid!" ejaculated Evelyn.

"We shall never get at the point," observed Lord Bellenden.

"I am quite satisfied," exclaimed the traveller.

"So am I," echoed Evelyn.

"I confess I am not," returned the Doctor, "for we

have jumped to a conclusion in defiance of all method; which I hold to be treason against the laws of true ratiocination."

"Do you say he abolished or not?" cried the traveller, with petulance.

"He did, and he didn't," answered M'Ginnis.

"What's coming now!" exclaimed Evelyn.

"Gentlemen, I see ye are none of ye metaphyseecians," observed M'Ginnis.

"Metaphysicians or not," said Lord Bellenden, "we seem to have lost the King of Prussia, and as the ladies have sent for us, we will finish the argument some other time."

CHAPTER XLVI.

WHICH MAY SUIT EITHER TOWN OR COUNTRY.

Grows, lives, and dies, in single blessedness.

SHAKSPEARE.

Lady Bellenden in her drawing-room, if she had not so lively, had at least an easier task than her Lord. The three Baronets' wives, vivacious as they had been in defence of their legal rights before dinner, sunk into dull and harmless quiescence, when those rights were no longer disturbed.

Mrs. Neville, departing from the character of humility she had imposed upon herself at dinner, received all Lady Bluemantle's advances (which were many) with disdainful coldness; and as to Lady Gertrude, it was quite sufficient that she obeyed her mother's commands by remaining in the drawing-room; to assist her in doing its honours, by endeavouring to put her guests at ease with their hostess, or with themselves, formed as she thought no part of the compact. She therefore gave herself up as before, entirely to Mrs. Neville; who, to do

her justice, returned all her amenities with a most exact reciprocity of feeling. To no other female in the room, not even to Miss Lyttleton or Georgina, did she vouchsafe a single word. Nay, so strong was the friendship of the two ladies, that a large window forming a considerable recess in the room, these Exclusives removed their chairs into it, in order the better to enjoy their unexpected meeting; which seemed, they said, as if it had happened in a foreign land.

In this emergency, Miss Lyttleton, after not only gaping, but stretching two or three times, declared they were all great bores! adding that, if she were at home, she would go and amuse herself in the stable.

"That would be an excellent resource," said Lady Bellenden.

"How is my Lord off for cattle?" continued Miss Lyttleton—"Miss Evelyn, are you fond of riding?"

"Very," answered Georgina.

"Do you hunt?"

"I am afraid you will despise me; I have only seen hounds throw off."

"That's something, however! Do you like going to the stables?"

"Very much—for I have a favourite little horse."

"Why, I declare, my dear creature, you have some soul in you. I could almost kiss you."

The two ladies in the recess looked round at this, and smiled at one another with ineffable superiority; but the conversation again languished, until Miss Lyttleton, turning to a Miss Carysfort, who sat near, asked her to enliven them with a little scandal.

Now let none of our readers imagine that this question was put merely because the said Miss Carysfoot was an old maid. Forbid it all the veneration I entertain for that sacred, and happy, because independent character: that is to say, if those to whom it belongs be rich. If poor, they must do as other poor devils do; fawn, and agree with, and traduce and invent, just as those who feed them please—but not the more (I still assert) because they are old maids, than if they were wives or

widows. No; if at all at their ease, they are more at their ease than others; and infinitely more courted, (particularly if they have not made their wills,) than the best wife and mother on earth. The cares of the world press light upon them; they have no anxiety about the health, character, or fortune of a tribe of children, the humour in which a husband may come home, or the continuance of their empire over his affections; they have nobody's taste to consult, overcome, or defer to; nor that sad source of altercation, the questions how they shall pass the summer in the country —or how live, or dress, or amuse themselves in town. From all this they are delivered. If they are sick, a cloud of nephews and nieces present themselves hourly at their doors, to inquire after their health; if well, the said nephews and nieces all rejoice. Meantime they generally have some decent old maid like themselves, half companion, half servant, always at their call at home, on whom they may vent all their little vexations, so as to appear in ever-smiling good-humour abroad.

You describe them so well, (I think I hear the reader say,) that you must certainly be one of the tribe yourself!

Of that, dear reader, I cannot satisfy thee; only if I am, I hope it is one of the happy sort I have been describing: for the blessings I have set before thee are not to be purchased without price. There is a requisite for this perfect enjoyment, not easily obtained, and often when supposed to be obtained, vibrating in a doubtful state between hope and fear; nay sometimes, after being apparently within our grasp, thrown voluntarily away, as it should seem from very wantonness. Yet this requisite is very simple, with all its difficulties. It is merely and solely, that the old maid should have fairly, soberly, deliberately, and bonâ fide, *given the matter up*. It is inconceivable, from not understanding this, to how many misrepresentations, and ignorant calumnies, the poor old maid is subject. For observe, I talk of a real, pure, and unsophisticated old maid: none of your doubtful characters, who are still hesitating and hankering, and put out

of their straight line, by every chance attention they meet: with whom one squeeze of the hand, (unexpected as it may be,) is sure to demolish a six months' resolution. Woe to all such for their happiness is not arrived, and they drag on a miserable, uncertain, between hawk and buzzard existence, which subjects them like the poor bat in the fable, that was neither bird nor beast, to a thousand affronts. But once fairly fixed in a determinate capacity, with a good well-engraved *Mrs.* on their cards, their independence continues for the rest of their lives, and their happiness is complete!

But there is no rule, no operation of nature, by which the change may be both effected and discovered? When a horse is aged, it is known by his teeth; a cow by her horns; birds moult their feathers, and snakes cast their skins at given times. Surely if Buffon had considered this matter. . . . .

I tell you, Madam, there is no criterion!—I have studied the subject, and you may rest assured there is nothing so indeterminate. It is in fact inconceivable how the signs vary and fluctuate, and fade, and glimmer again —how differently, in point of time, the different species of this extraordinary animal exhibit the decisive marks of their crisis. In some auspicious subjects, I have known it to take place at forty, and they have continued ever afterwards to a happy old age, in constant respectability and good humour. In others the symptoms have appeared and disappeared, and varied, so as to puzzle the most sagacious observer, from forty to sixty. And I have even known the phenomena fluctuate in some instances till near seventy, before the commotion has thoroughly subsided.

Now, whether in Miss Carysfort's instance these phænomena had been protracted in an unusual degree; that is, whether at sixty, rebellion still continued; in other words, whether she had not *given the matter up;* or whether the devil has any share in colouring our tempers at our births; it is certain that long before any of the symptoms I have been describing began to appear, I may say even in her youth, this lady was remarkable for

that superiority of prudence and good conduct, which could never endure anything in others that was less correct than her own standard. It was hence that, when either public or private misfortunes were most frequent, she was most abroad! and during a state of doubt as to the reputation of any of her friends, so eager was she to clear the innocence of the unhappy parties by all proper inquiries and communications, that it was observed her carriage and horses never had so little rest as upon such occasions.

Such was the correct and amiable being to whom, in the absence of other amusement, Miss Lyttleton directed the important request, to enliven them with a little scandal.

It was in vain the good Lady Bellenden protested against the effects of such a mode of enlivening, directed to such a source. "Why, my dear madam," replied Miss Lyttleton, "what can we possibly do? Lady Gertrude there, though she is your daughter, and I am your guest, does not think me fit to speak to; and Mrs. Neville never talks till the gentlemen come up; or if she does, about nothing but laces, which I don't understand; or what she is doing in Lancashire, which I don't care a whistle about."

Both the exclusives turned their heads round at this, and exchanged smiles, and Mrs. Neville shrugged up her shoulders; but both remained otherwise unmoved.

"You have a companion near you," said Lady Bellenden, looking at Georgina, "who perhaps might enliven you, were you to try."

"Oh dear no; I am told she is very accomplished, which I am not: and besides is a great deal too good: for she would not let me abuse that wretch Tremaine just now; and when I asked her whether she did not like talking of the fellows, she said no! which I believe was a great lie; and therefore I say again, Miss Carysfort, do give us a little scandal."

CHAPTER XLVII.

A STORY.

> A very honest woman, but something given to lie, which Woman should not do, but in the way of honesty.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

Miss Carysfort protested with an assumed laugh, that she did not know why she applied to her for scandal, as she made it a rule never to talk of anything till she had ascertained its truth; and that while so many unhappy things were passing in the world, there was no occasion, she thought, for what was called scandal.

Lady Bellenden asked with some interest whether she alluded to anything particular; in which the good Countess verified a remark that has sometimes been made, that so prone are even the best and wisest natures to busy themselves with the history of other people, that they listen to the relation in spite of even predetermined caution against the relater. Had Lady Bellenden for a single moment recollected her own opinions of Miss Carysfort,—whom, from her sense of the dangerous character of a mere gossip, much more of an ill-natured one, she never treated as of any authority,—she would not have given opportunity to her tongue, by the question. But the question was out, and necessarily answered.

"I am unwilling to say anything," said Miss Carysfort, "even though all the world is full of it, that concerns so near a friend of Miss Lyttleton's as Mrs. C———."

"Dear me, what of her?" asked Miss Lyttleton; "why I had a letter from her this morning."

The intimation of Miss Carysfort roused the attention of all the ladies, and among them of Mrs. Neville herself, who was also particularly acquainted with Mrs. C———; a sort of friendship, or rather civil intercourse, existing between them; and she actually turned from the fair Gertrude to listen. But the fair Gertrude retained all

her *sang froid*, and appeared totally unmoved about a person, whom she had met indeed in society, but not in that society where alone she thought it of consequence to meet any body.

"You amaze me," cried Miss Lyttleton; "do pray say what has happened?"

"Only what happens too often," replied Miss Carysfort, "in other families besides Mrs. C———'s; a discovery which has already ended in a separation, and must in a divorce!"

"Nay, that's quite impossible," said Miss Lyttleton, "for her letter of this morning is dated from Dalemain, where Mr. C——— is at home with her."

"I wish it may be so," replied Miss Carysfort.

Lady Bellenden immediately pronounced that the proof was demonstrative, and that Miss Carysfort must have been misinformed.

"I seldom am," returned that lady, "and at any rate have had the story with so many particulars, there must be something in it."

"Oh! do pray let us have it," cried Lyttleton—"for as I am sure it is all a wicked lie, it will be such fun to tell it again to Mrs. C———."

"Had we not better drop it?" said Lady Bellenden.

"Oh! not for the world," exclaimed Miss Lyttleton—"do pray go on."

Miss Carysfort, however, rather drew back, till all the ladies requesting to hear the report, and all adding they should entirely disbelieve it, she upon that condition (which she said would render it perfectly harmless) related her news, with all its accompanying circumstances.

It was a round unvarnished tale, amounting to neither more nor less than this—that Mr. C——— having returned unexpectedly in the night from Newmarket,—where it was supposed he was to have remained some days—went softly to his chamber: that to his astonishment he found on his own chair a leathern pair of those parts of dress which delicacy, or indelicacy (I know not which) always forbids us to name, and which properly belong to the male sex; that alarmed at this, he looked farther, and

by the light of the lamp, beheld a head on his pillow which certainly he thought had no business there: that he did not make out to whom it belonged, but that it was a short cropped head without a nightcap; finally, that both Mrs. C——— and her partner were locked in sleep.

"And what happened?" cried Miss Lyttleton, struggling with the greatest difficulty against a burst of laughter.

"Why Mr. C———'s first impulse," said Miss Carysfort, "was to use his pistols; but he contented himself with seizing a horsewhip he had in the room, and laid it most unmercifully both on Mrs. C——— and her paramour, till the servants, alarmed at their cries, rescued them."

Here Miss Lyttleton could no longer restrain herself, and almost falling on the floor in a convulsion of laughter, exclaimed, "Oh! my dear Cary, my dear Lady Bellenden —never in this world was anything so good!—my poor friend! and my poor self to be so horsewhipped!—what must I do to that savage C———? The whipping was mine, the cropped head was mine, and the culottes were mine;—I went unexpectedly to stay all night, and Mrs. C——— being alone, slept with her; I shall absolutely die of the conceit."

Here fits of laughter stopt her, and she could not proceed. The laughter indeed was catching, for none of the ladies could any longer resist, save only the Exclusive in the window, (who, however, was seen to smile) and Miss Carysfort herself, who seemed rather disconcerted at the total overthrow of her story, which she endeavoured indeed to set up again, by observing that it was at least strange, if not incredible, that a young lady should wear culottes, and these culottes buckskins—for as to the fact of their being found as she had described, she would pledge her existence for its truth.

Miss Lyttleton assured her that in this she was perfectly correct, and that it was no secret in the Dalemain Hunt, to which she belonged; adding that she never took a long journey on horseback, as she had on the day in question, without the comfort of that most useful apparatus.

After the ridicule had a little subsided, Lady Bellenden observed gravely, that it was almost too bad for laughter: for that it was owing solely to the fortunate circumstance of Miss Lyttleton's being her guest at the same time with Miss Carysfort, that the reputation of a very worthy woman had not been blasted.

The gentlemen now all came flocking in, and Mr. Beaumont begged to be informed of the cause of the peals they had heard, even in the dining-room.

"You must ask Miss Lyttleton," answered Lady Gertrude; "I am sure you cannot tax me with anything so hoydenish."

"And yet I have seen you laugh, Lady Gertrude."

"In other company then," replied the lady.

Miss Lyttleton had now made all the gentlemen acquainted with what she emphatically called *her* anecdote, and was relating to Evelyn the danger she had been in of being horsewhipped.

"This comes," observed the Doctor gravely, "of women's wearing the breeches;" a remark not at all agreeable to Mr. Placid, who conceiving it levelled at him, instantly turned away.

Lady Gertrude now stretching her fair neck far (very far for her) out of the window in which she had remained hitherto without moving, Miss Lyttleton,—who not worshipping at the shrine of the exclusives, did not, to use her own language, care a farthing for them,—came up to her, and said she was glad she had at last found something worth looking at.

"Pray what can it be, my dear?" said Miss Lyttleton, with a familiarity which certainly gave no pleasure to the dignified lady to whom it was addressed. She indeed seemed struck with horror at the address itself, and immediately prepared to change her seat.

"Oh! don't trouble yourself," continued her careless companion, "I assure you though I bark, I don't bite, and as it shocks you so much, I will even promise not to call you my dear again. Nay, pray don't move, I am not going to stay; I only wanted to see what could possibly have the honour of being looked at so earnestly;—well!

I declare if there is not that wretch Tremaine, walking by himself! he has surely been under the window, all the time you have been in it. Oh! oh! now the secret's out."

Lady Gertrude's countenance began absolutely to show some emotion, and she even observed with displeasure, that to say so, was at least a liberty she would not have taken with Miss Lyttleton.

Miss Lyttleton replied that she saw no liberty in it, as it was a mere observation on a fact.

Lady Gertrude said she might be wrong as to her fact.

"Well, perhaps I am, for I observed him to-day, and he cut you cruelly."

Lady Gertrude looked still more horrified—as the Amazon afterwards boastingly said,—yet she continued tauntingly, "Well now, I wonder what can make him run away from your ladyship! Such a person as me I know he hates, and with some reason, for I once forgot myself so far as to lay my whip across his high mightiness's shoulders. But such a person as your ladyship would suit him to a T;—indeed, I think you are quite formed for one another."

At that moment, Tremaine, who had endeavoured to walk off his disgusts in the cool of the evening, had re-entered the drawing-room, so as to receive these last words in his ear. Lady Gertrude had sense enough to feel this satire, and to perceive that the satire was intended—but as she also knew that satire was not her *forte*, she had the prudence not to reply: but with piteous looks, after searching for Mrs. Neville in vain, besought the protection of Mr. Beaumont. This, (though he had secretly enjoyed the rencontre,) to a lady of her quality he could not refuse, and therefore endeavoured to create a diversion in her favour, by engaging the Amazon himself.

"You do Mr. Tremaine a great deal of honour," said he, looking at him; "I wish he but knew how high he stands in your opinion."

"Perhaps he would not thank me," answered the lady,

(perceiving but not minding Tremaine) "nor you either, indeed—for I think you both very much alike:" (Mr. Beaumont bowed,) "for both of you," continued Miss Lyttleton, "are dandies, only a little old; and as Lady Gertrude here is a dandy of the first order, I think either of you would do for her."

Tremaine reddened with the deepest disgust; but the huntress went on—"All three indeed are very refined, and very solemn, and very exclusive, and all that; and though I declare, (looking closer at Mr. Beaumont,) you are grown quite bald, (dear me! only see how bald!) I am sure Lady Gertrude quite prefers you to all the company—particularly as Mr. Tremaine has cut her."

The awkward looks of both the male and the female exclusive, at this speech, were diverting to the by-standers, and even to Evelyn and Georgina: though the latter, upon a distant sofa, could but just make it out. She, however, though all idea of the fulfilment of Lady Bellenden's wish had been long dispelled, had natural good-breeding enough to refrain from even looking at Lady Gertrude, much more from showing the impression which this rattle had made upon her.

Lady Gertrude had nothing left for it but to change her place, and seek a new companion; and a seat on Georgina's sofa being vacant, she took refuge there, followed by Beaumont.

"There goes refinement, both male and female;" cried Miss Lyttleton aloud; "I declare I have put it quite to flight; I never enjoyed drawing a badger more. Well now! is it not strange that people place their happiness in giving themselves airs, when it always requires the consent of others to let them, and if one does not choose it, they never can succeed."

"More in that than at first sight appears," said Evelyn *.

* Were it possible to suspect the Amazon of reading Lord Clarendon's History, we should think she had had her eye on the following passage;—

"Lord Falkland used to say that, for keeping of state, there

"For heaven's sake let us go," cried Tremaine.

"Your carriage is not ready," answered Evelyn with most provoking patience.

The storm had now come round to Tremaine.

"Pray, Mr. Tremaine," said the lady, "may I ask how you like your retirement?"

"Far better, Madam," replied he, "than bad company."

"Oh! your most obedient,—that, I see, was levelled at me;" and perceiving Lady Gertrude looked pleased, she went on—"I'm glad to have given you an opportunity of restoring yourself by it to my Lady Gertrude's good graces.—To say truth, you have not been even commonly civil to her, though she is at home;—though indeed I may be wrong, for as you are both of you exclusives, who are above all common comprehension, you may have been very attentive to one another for all that."

Lady Gertrude coloured, and Tremaine bowing with great dryness, asked her if she had any more commands for him.

"None in particular," she replied; "only if you will help Miss Carysfort to make out why you cut Lady Gertrude and Mrs. Neville before dinner—you, who used to be so intimate with them both—you will relieve that good lady from considerable anxiety. She has been talking about it ever since."

"Talking about it!" cried Tremaine, with evident disgust.

"Yes! she will have it that either Lady Gertrude or Miss Neville refused you, or that you refused them—she does not know which—before you went out of town; and that that was the reason you shut yourself up. Now, I follow the old maxim, and never believe above half what the world says; so I think it can only have been one of the two ladies mentioned.

must go two to it; for let the proudest or most formal man resolve to keep what distance he will towards others, a bold and confident man instantly demolishes that whole machine, and gets within him, and even obliges him to his own laws of conversation."

The effrontery of this speech seemed to affect both the parties concerned. Lady Gertrude coloured deep red—then turned white—and gave evident signs of resentment. For want of something else, however, she fell to pulling a rose from her bosom, and tore it all to pieces; while Tremaine, who hated Miss Carysfort's mischievous meddling, so as to shudder at her very name, showed palpable marks of alarm, as well as of anger, from which he was not relieved even by the secession of his persecutrix; who went only, as she said, to bring Miss Carysfort to him.

The Lady Gertrude did not feel much happier. All exclusive as she was, having taken refuge with Georgina, she could not help condescending to notice her with a few words.

"What an odious, bold, impudent person!" said Lady Gertrude—"don't you think so, Miss Evelyn?"

"I scarcely know her," answered Georgina, "but she seems to have great spirits."

"Horribly great, indeed," returned Lady Gertrude; "and I hate spirits—they are so vulgar."

"Yet Mrs. Neville," remarked Georgina, "thinks there is no harm in her."

"That is very extraordinary," said Lady Gertrude, "for she always speaks of her to me with the utmost contempt."

Georgina, who was the most single-hearted creature alive, wondered at this; not adverting to the possibility of even a very great lady's accommodating herself to the tone of any companion she might wish to please; and not aware, that although Mrs. Neville revelled in wealth, yet she was still very far removed from that situation among the *haute noblesse*, that enviable point at the very head of fashion, which she affected, and which it was her fondest ambition to reach. This, however, may serve to explain the different modes, both of talking and acting towards Miss Lyttleton and Georgina, which belonged to Mrs. Neville, when Lady Gertrude was or was not present. In point of fact, this distinguished lady had too much character herself to be a genuine exclusive,

and only put it on when it suited the object of ambition immediately before her; for various were her objects, and she could fly from one to the other with a versatility and talent which showed her made for greater things, and only wanting the ingredients of sincerity and goodness, to render her a very powerful woman.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

MANAGEMENT.

Will you have me, Lady?
No, my Lord, unless I might have another for working days; your Grace is too costly to wear every day.

SHAKSPEARE.

This ability in everything that engaged her attention, public or private, plunged Mrs. Neville in perpetual business; and whether the management of an estate, or the management of an election, the getting off a house, or the getting off a daughter, was concerned, her industry, vigilance, and powers of acting were first-rate. As she had several daughters, the latter subject had begun to be a very serious concern to her; especially as she had been known to say, that *management* only was required to make any two persons marry as their friends might choose. From her mode of settting about this herself, we might have suspected her taking the hint from the stratagem which brought Benedict and Beatrice together, and of thinking with Hero and Ursula,

Of this matter
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay.

But this supposition one thing forbad; for Mrs. Neville was personally much too occupied with the world itself to study it in Shakspeare.

Be this as it may, there was more foundation for what

the Lyttleton had blurted out upon the surmise of Miss Carysfort, than usually belonged to Miss Carysfort's surmises:—for, although Tremaine had not offered himself to Miss Neville, she had been offered to him, and that without either party knowing anything about the matter. If any young woman of spirit and condition think this impossible, let her only examine the world a little farther than its outside, and she may find the thing not only perfectly feasible, but of every-day practice. Possibly she may discover, that, without knowing it, it may even have been her own case, and that while mamma has appeared occupied with her cards, and has left her seemingly to herself, she has been fairly brought to market, and bought or rejected as fortune decided.

What manœuvring has not sometimes taken place (not by the poor honest girl, but) by the more wary mamma, that the two parties should sit by one another, dance with one another, and say pretty things of one another, so as eventually to think well of one another; and yet all appear the most unpremeditated, natural thing in the world!

Just so was it for the best part of a whole spring, between Tremaine and the eldest Miss Neville, under the guidance of Miss Neville's mamma. It was at court that Tremaine was struck to the full extent of whatever impression was made; for certainly on acquaintance it never became deeper. Very handsome features, and a very graceful curtsy, caught his eye, and a compliment upon her manner and countenance by the Queen (herself an admirable judge) to the delighted mother, caught his ear. He dined that day at Neville House. In the evening there was a private concert, and Tremaine pronounced Miss Neville's finger to be, as it was, one of the best in London. The attentions of Tremaine never went farther—but they went quite far enough for Mrs. Neville, aided by the before-mentioned talent of *management*, to found upon them very strong hopes of a great *establishment* for her daughter.

This word establishment is of infinitely more force

in the English language, than perhaps its dictionaries are aware of. Its importance is of such a nature, and brought so home to the feelings of the parent as well as of the child, that it is inconceivable what a number of little moral duties, and points of delicacy, are swallowed up and lost in its contemplation. It is indeed nowhere to be found in the Gospel; but, like the great virtue there panegyrised, it seems to cover a multitude of sins.

Strange to say, the chief difficulty was with the gentleman himself,—who often talked of the folly, not to say immorality, of very unequal matches in point of age. To remedy this, Mrs. Neville, with no view to any particular alliance, keeping it indeed religiously out of sight, and as if quite accidentally, would gravely debate the matter with him, and prove theoretically, how much greater chance for happiness there was when a young girl gave herself to the guidance and protection of a man who knew the world, was beyond the heyday of passion, and who would therefore look for all his pleasures at home, than with a youth, perhaps the sport of every whim, likely to change in his feelings, to neglect, perhaps abandon his wife. On such occasions Mrs. Neville, after moralising very prettily, would support theory by example, and would bring out, carelessly, as if just recollecting it, and, perhaps, after having mentioned a match or two of unequal ages between others: "Now there are my daughters—particularly Miss Neville; it is extraordinary, young as they are, how they see things as I do. I absolutely believe, nay, I am quite sure of it, that, had I never endeavoured to lead them on this subject, so important to a mother, their own innate taste would induce them to prefer men full twenty years older than themselves: they say they are so much more agreeable, so much less self-sufficient."—And then this skilful lady, after well-using the tact of which she was mistress, would add, "Indeed, to own the truth to you, Mr. Tremaine, though it is a matter of too much delicacy even to glance at, if it were not for our very old acquaintance, I should not

wish, with my daughter's feelings, and after what I have actually heard her say of *you* (not to me, but to her companions, young people like herself), I should not, I say—wish—that is, it is just possible it might be not quite so prudent"——and here she would stop, in so pretty a confusion, that her daughter herself, avowing her sentiments, could scarcely have carried it better.

Notwithstanding the very old acquaintance alluded to, Tremaine in fact knew very little of the lady making the allusion, more than that she was a very great lady, with a very fine countenance, and an immense fortune. She passed much of her time in the world, yet seemed to give all her attention to the direction of a large family, and all without the least stain upon her virtue. He, therefore, felt pleased and flattered by this sort of confidence, and, being himself open as day, had not, with all his disgusts, the least suspicion that Mrs. Neville was angling for him in favour of her daughter, as Hero, in the passage above adverted to, angled for Beatrice in favour of Benedict. He would therefore reply, as perhaps the lady wished; and according as he replied, she would inform him more particularly of what Miss Neville had said; how she had praised his fine air, his manners, his conversation, and had even sometimes added she would prefer dancing with him to the youngest man in the room.

Wiser, and even older men than Tremaine, have been caught with such latent, such well-managed flattery—and the spell was wound up when this Urganda added, as she sometimes would (if, after consulting the tact that has been mentioned, she found she was safe), "In short, my dear Sir, though I should grieve to see less of you in a house which you are pleased to say is agreeable to your taste, and much as I should shudder to compromise my daughter's delicacy, yet I am sure you will allow for a parent's anxiety, and not expose me when I say, that it perhaps would be best for the happiness of both parties, if you saw less of Miss Neville than you do;—of hers, for the reasons I have with such unaccountable boldness ventured to mention; of yours, in order to spare a man

of honour the pain of thinking he had even unintentionally made an innocent young person unhappy."

It required all, and more than all Tremaine's experience in the world, to be indifferent to a mother and daughter who thought so favourably of him. But in truth, the old fault so often mentioned, the natural fastidiousness, not to say waywardness of Tremaine, having been his enemy through life in lighter things, could not fail to influence his fate on this most important part of a man's conduct. With a heart originally warm, liberal, and tender too, his disposition towards marriage was not merely natural, but a principle. Yet he had reached an age not far off forty, without even an engagement. A close self-examination, therefore, in regard to Miss Neville, became absolutely necessary to this man of honour as well as of refinement; and the result was, that he resolved not to discontinue his visits, but strictly to scrutinise her conduct, and his own heart.

All this while, the poor girl was totally unconscious of what was passing; and though her mother had acquainted her how struck Tremaine had been with her grace and *retenue* at court, she could not make out why, according to mamma's directions, the moment he appeared, all her spirits, of which she had a great exuberance, were to be repressed, and why at eighteen she was to assume the manners of a woman of thirty.

This could not long be concealed, and Tremaine began to shudder, when dancing with her at a very select ball, she not only gave the Highland fling with something very like violence, but actually turned both himself and others in the dance, two or three times oftener than the dance required.

The very little inclination of Tremaine, not even amounting to *penchant*, and excited solely by the appeal made by the mother to his feelings, began to give way. It is impossible, said he to himself, that this girl can prefer a man twenty years beyond her in age; there must be some mistake. In this frame of mind, calling suddenly at Neville House when mamma was out, he

found her at high romps with her sister and a cousin, a young Cantab, little more than her own age.

The dreadful sounds of "Tom, be quiet," alarmed him on the stairs, and his fear was completed when, entering the drawing-room, he found his Sophonisba heated with play, holding up the fragments of Tom's cravat in noisy triumph, while her own dress exhibited indubitable signs that the familiarity of cousins had gone as far as it legitimately might.

The consequence was, that though too just to accuse a young person of the faults of her mother, he viewed the mother herself with interminable disgust; and seeing at once the reality of her character, all intimacy ceased.

CHAPTER XLIX.

FEMALE REFINEMENT.

> Octavia is of a cold and still conversation.
> She shows a body rather than a life.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

And now for the fair Gertrude! Was that surmise of the Carysfort also founded? Strange to say, more so than at first sight appeared. For though no two creatures were less alike than Lady Bellenden and Mrs. Neville, or than the fair beings whom they own as daughters, the attention of Mr. Tremaine had been excited by the dignified exclusive, in at least as great a degree as by the playful Neville.

Lest the reader, however, should imagine that Mr. Tremaine was a mere man of whim, and endowed with neither penetration nor consistency, let us apprise him, as we ought, that he was honest, and true to his tastes. He had no objection to, or perhaps he even required, a liveliness of character to charm him, but he required still more *à fond;* a dignity, and even gravity of cha-

racter, in all things where principle or feeling was concerned. If his interest about Miss Neville (whatever it was) seem to contradict this, let it be recollected that she had been misrepresented to him, and that he soon discovered his mistake: whereas the Lady Gertrude awed the sense in all the pride and power of a retired and lofty manner, which, even if not all her own, seemed to be so naturally inherited from her aunt (who was the very queen of correctness as well as fashion), that the sceptre of the Duchess, by the easiest of all transitions, appeared to devolve, as of course, upon the imitative niece. When Tremaine, therefore, first saw her, he was inclined to approve, because all he lived with and most respected approved also. He, however, knew nothing of her real character, and he was checked at first, fully as much by his feeling in regard to their disparity of years, as his uncertainty of the feeling of the family on their disparity of rank.

The latter fear was soon set at rest; for independent of the plain character of Lord Bellenden, and the high antiquity of his own family—in which there had been titles long before Lord Bellenden's was ennobled—the attentions of the Duchess convinced him that one of her own daughters, much more her niece, would not be thought too good for a gentleman, who, though a commoner, was of ancient and even noble descent, was most fashionably received, and was master of twenty thousand a year.

The beautiful and prudent Gertrude seemed to be of the same opinion, and intimated it by all the means to which an exclusive could condescend; for not only she was always unbent when he addressed her, but she showed a marked pleasure when he did so—allowed him to present his arm at the Opera when no other commoner could obtain that favour, and pronounced him such supreme *bon ton*, that at Almack's, notwithstanding his disinclination to dancing, he was often forced into her service, spite of that disinclination.

She went even farther, for she praised his political conduct, wondered he did not speak oftener in Parliament,

and was several times known to have said, in reality, in regard to disparity of age, that which in the instance of the poor Neville had been only said *for* her.

All this from a finished exclusive! How many men have been caught with baits of less price! In truth, the Lady Gertrude, though she viewed establishment as seriously as her aunt would have her, was in this instance as sincere in respect to love itself, as her powers of loving would let her.

Cannot then an exclusive love?—Yes! in the *second* instance—but in the first, no one but herself; and just so far could the Lady Gertrude have loved Tremaine, if Tremaine had loved the Lady Gertrude.

And why did he not? Simply because, with an imposing appearance of dignity, and even accomplishments, they were wholly unsupported by either sense or feeling. In short, had the Lady Gertrude lived when Pope wrote his satire on women, it might have been said that it was from her outline he filled his canvas with the well-known portrait of Chloe.

> Yet Chloe sure was form'd without a spot,
> Nature in her then err'd not, but forgot.
> With every pleasing, every prudent part,
> Say, what can Chloe want?—She wants a heart.
> She speaks, behaves, and acts just as she ought,
> But never, never reach'd one generous thought.
> Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,
> Content to dwell in decencies for ever.
> So very reasonable, so unmoved,
> As never yet to love—or to be loved.

Was this a wife for Tremaine? With all his defects (and we have shown that he had many), we hope not.

The rest of this historiette is short—for it was not possible for a person, in reality so little gifted, long to disguise that reality to the fault-finding eye of such an *attentif* (for observe, reader, we do not call him lover), as our man of refinement.

His first alarm was for her heart, at a tragedy, and began by his observing her not merely unmoved, but in full flirtation with Mr. Beaumont, while

> Belvidera poured her soul in love,

Willing to attribute this merely to accident, he called upon her the next day, and turned the discourse upon the tragic poets:—Shakspeare, Otway, Corneille, Racine. He was delighted to find she knew something of most, and eagerly asked which she preferred?——To his astonishment she answered that she did not see much difference. This apathy, or rather ignorance, shocked him, and he stayed away a week.

Meeting her afterwards on horseback in the Park, accompanying her cousins the Ladies S—— and her uncle the Duke, he joined the party. She rode gracefully, and looked particularly well. A bevy of dandies joined them also, and (as upon such occasions alone she did), she became talkative. One of the Ladies S—— seeing a man in a tree looking at them as they rode by, observed he was like Charles in the oak. This brought on an historical conversation between the two cousins, in which Lady Gertrude remarked, it was a pity that, notwithstanding his wonderful escape, first in the oak, and then in disguise, they should have cut Charles's head off after all!

Her cousins laughed: even the dandies smiled; and the Duke observed gravely that he would make her a present of Hume's History. Poor Tremaine fell back in unconquerable mortification.

Whatever inclination he had had was now cured, and mere civility took the place of attention: he still, however, scrutinised, but the scrutiny was unfortunate. A letter from Lady Bellenden at Lisbon announced so much increase of illness, as to make her wish for her daughter to join her; for which her father, who was flying to his wife, desired her to prepare. Many of her friends condoled with her on the situation of her mother. "Yes!" said she, "it is quite shocking, and most provoking too just now, at the moment when we've got to town, and the balls are all beginning."

Tremaine heard this, and from that moment regarded the fair Gertrude not merely with indifference, but aversion. This was the

Last scene of all,
And ends this strange eventful history.

CHAPTER L.

IN WHICH SYMPTOMS ARE HANDLED WITH GREAT LEARNING.

> How silver sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,
> Like softest music to attending ears.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

TREMAINE'S barouche had passed Homestead Hall by half a mile, and the inhabitants of that quiet mansion had been in bed for half an hour before any one of the party seemed disposed to break the silence in which they had departed from Bellenden House.

Their way lay through a valley watered by the Wharf *, whose meadowed banks exhaled all the sweetness of the hay harvest. On one side were woods, buried by the evening shade, save where the moon, just risen, had not "*fired*," but silvered the "tops of the eastern pines." Not a sound broke in upon the stillness, except the regular returns of the horses' feet, and now and then the bark of a distant dog from the hills above.

It was a scene to soothe the senses of all the party, and that soothing each seemed afraid to disturb. All were therefore silent.

Evelyn was employed in drawing a comparison between the richness of the treat which at present courted him, and the contests of the vanity he had just witnessed. Georgina, the sweet and natural Georgina, gave herself up the more to the unsophisticated pleasure of the scene, from the recollection of the many artificial parts she had just seen acted, by persons who yet would have been enraged beyond forgiveness, if their sincerity had in any thing been questioned. And Tremaine required all the softness which by degrees stole upon him, to enable him

* A very beautiful river in Yorkshire.

to forget the disgust of the last hours, so as to think, much more to talk of them, with the commonest patience.

For the first mile, indeed, he was seriously revolving a vow within himself, never again to stir out of the precincts of Woodington; when he recollected the effects of such a vow upon the forlorn Sir Hildebrand, and corrected it into a resolution never again to go to a public day, or to extend his acquaintance beyond those neighbours who were at that instant his companions.

In these thoughts the carriage rolled rapidly on, and the spell of silence seemed likely to continue: when Evelyn, after contemplating the moon, which, now risen higher, began to glitter in the rippling of the water, suddenly broke out with, "If Doctor M'Ginnis were here, what would he ———"

"For Heaven's sake," cried Tremaine, looking almost astounded, "who but yourself could think of interrupting such a scene as this with that odious man's name!"

"Perhaps," answered the Doctor, drily, "you might like Mrs. Neville's or Miss Lyttleton's better!"

"Worse and worse," observed Tremaine; "those women are absolute imps."

"For shame," said Georgina, with gentleness; "this charming night ought to cure ill-humour, whatever our reason for it."

"You are always so good!" replied Tremaine; "but even *you*, if you would but answer honestly—have you then been happy in any one minute of your life?"

"Yes, very, in every part of it spent with dear Lady Bellenden."

"Which amounted to that one minute;" pursued Tremaine; "but during any other?"

"Happy is an important word," replied Georgina, hesitatingly; "and I have even been mortified; but I have also been amused."

"Mortified by a handsome fool, and amused by a virago," rejoined Tremaine. "I watched every turn of that tell-tale countenance."

"I own you have made me out," pursued Georgina; "for I was hurt by Lady Gertrude's *finery*, but more

amused than disgusted by Miss Lyttleton's rattle, especially as Mrs. Neville seemed to think she meant no ill."

"My dear Georgina," cried Tremaine; and in the warmth of the moment he pressed her hand—

Dear Georgina! her hand pressed, and in a soft summer's night!—Then a declaration is at length coming from the refined *fastidieux*.

Now there are three reasons against this. In the first place, the lady's father was present; which would have included a solecism in the etiquette of these matters never to be forgiven. In the next, he had no suspicion whatever how she would have taken a declaration, if he had made one; it would therefore have been altogether conrary to rule,—since, founded or not founded, there must be at least a hope on the part of the gentleman, before he screws himself up to the mark in question. Thirdly and lastly, (and which, perhaps, had better have been put first,) he had himself no thought whatever of making a declaration.

In sober truth, Tremaine pressed Miss Evelyn's hand, merely because he was pressing his argument; and though it was a soft hand, a delicate hand, a tender, elegant, and feminine little hand, (and moreover such a hand was a part of a beautiful girl, which Tremaine particularly admired,) yet he knew no more that at that moment he was pressing it, than if it had been Miss Carysfort's.

Not that he was insensible to all the little thrills and emotions, which even the tip of a finger can sometimes convey through another finger, up to the very heart; but then his heart must have been previously awakened, and the act itself must have proceeded in company with the proper associations.

But in this instance the associations were not in unison, for they were all employed upon persons who excited the reverse of tenderness within his bosom,—namely, Mrs. Neville, Lady Gertrude, and the Amazon.

It was not exactly the same with Georgina; for with her pure, unruffled soul, attuned generally to softness, and full of that respect for herself which perfect innocence always creates, she had forgotten all the little disappointments which Lady Gertrude had made her for

a momunt feel; the noise and nonsense she had witnessed had begun to sink from her remembrance; and she was open alone to the impressions of the scenery we have been describing. With her, associations were all the other way. When Tremaine, therefore, uttered his exclamation, and pressed her hand to boot, as if to prevent its being lost upon her, a sensation of surprise, not unaccompanied with pleasure, came over her. It tingled in the fingers he pressed with his, passed up the arm, and took the road to a heart as pure as that Seraphina's which, in the dream of a moral writer of the last age, was found without a spot *.

I say, "took the road," because I am far from abusing the despotic powers with which authors are invested, of relating whatever they please of what passes in a young lady's bosom, whether they are sure of the fact or not, and all because there is no fear of contradiction. I therefore do not pretend to say that this action and speech of Tremaine's went directly home to that lovely heart; but content myself with what squares better with both truth and probability, in saying they took the road to it. It is certain that Georgina had been gratified by his attentions during the whole of the visit to Bellenden House, where he seemed to have neither eyes nor ears for any body but herself, except when forced to make comparisons between her and others, which ended uniformly and greatly to her advantage.

In this frame of mind, give me leave to say that an endearing expression, though involuntary, (and more so if accompanied by a squeeze of the hand,) becomes often critical with a young and sensible girl, especially if it happen in the country, and by moonlight by the bank of a river. It has been known sometimes to decide the thing, almost without the party's knowing it herself.

Her father observed the action, and heard the exclamation too; but on him it made not the least impression. And why? Simply I believe because he was not a young girl.

* See the Spectator, No. 587.

"My dear Georgina!" cried Tremaine, and pressing her hand as he said it, "you are so honest yourself, that you confide at once in another's honesty; but of all women, do not be run away with by Mrs. Neville."

"Did she ever run away with *you?*" asked the Doctor.

His daughter laughed at the question, while Tremaine returned, "She was nearer doing so than you are aware of—but, thank Heaven! I escaped."

"But the application to giddy-brain?" said Evelyn.

"That as Mrs. Neville can be all things to all men, and all women," replied Tremaine, "her account of the person in question is not to be trusted."

"Poor giddy-brain!" exclaimed the Doctor: "but I understand Mrs. Neville was very civil to Georgy, and invited her to Belvidere Castle, and promised balls, and I know not what, at the assizes. I protest I have a great mind she should go."

"To be left again in the lurch," said Tremaine, "the moment a Lady Gertrude appears."

"I acknowledge I should not like that," remarked Georgina; "and should prefer Miss Lyttleton a thousand times. She at least seems to have honesty."

"The honesty of a wild cat," answered Tremaine.

"I confess," said the Doctor, "I thought she scratched admirably: but will you tell us why you hate her?"

"Simply because she departs from every one point in the character of her sex, which makes it either respectable or amiable."

"She hunts," observed the Doctor.

"And would no doubt fight a duel," continued Tremaine, "and drink and swear, were drinking and swearing again in fashion among men. She is fearless in unsexing herself, and I confess I never see her without wondering at her petticoats, as much as if I beheld a man in woman's clothes; and all this is to be excused because she means no harm."

"Surely you are too severe," said Georgina: "do you really know any harm in her?—any vice?"

"Not positive wickedness, as there is in Miss Carysfort," returned Tremaine; "but short of wickedness, all

that can make a woman disgusting to a man, in disappointing him, every moment, of his just expectations."

"Just expectations!" said Georgina.

"Yes: for does not Miss Evelyn know, better than any other, how the hope of being pleased, soothingly and elegantly pleased, is excited by the mere approach of a young woman! What delight do we not expect from her softness! that softness which real beauty will always take for her handmaid; that softness which wins our recollections when beauty itself may be no more; that softness, in short, which she who asks this question would better know how to appreciate, but that she possesses so much of it as to be unconscious of its value."

He paused, and looked as if he meant more even than he had said.

"This is very delicate," thought Georgina; and it was almost doubtful whether the application of it to her, or the sentiment itself, pleased her most.

"You will please, Mr. Tremaine," said Evelyn, "not to turn my girl's head with your flattering tongue."

"The best if not the only excuse that I have heard for Miss Lyttleton," continued Tremaine, not minding him, "is that she is eccentric. How many faults does not that word generate, as well as defend in men! But in women it is totally out of character. Neither genius, nor wit, nor generosity, nor even honesty, can make up for it; so peculiarly does the real power of a woman depend upon her power of pleasing, and so exclusively does that, for more than a moment, depend upon softness."

"I agree," said Evelyn.

"Never indeed was there such a mistake," pursued Tremaine, "as when a female supposes that eccentricity can do more than amuse. That it should attract or inspire that fondness, that devotion of heart, which alone is love —which forms at once the pride of woman and the happiness of man—might as well be expected from the tricks of a monkey."

"I agree again," cried Evelyn.

Georgina smiled, and felt all the force of the sentiment, but was too much pleased to interrupt him.

He went on—"It may perhaps be want of gallantry to talk to *you* so much of gentleness; but remember it was Miss Lyttleton that forces me to revert to what I think is the intention of the Creator himself in this respect; for if woman was 'Heaven's last best gift, the ever new delight' of man, it was because of her gentleness. That is properly the 'strong enforcement' of the sex. It is true you talk of your conquests, and we own ourselves your slaves; but it is gentleness that wins us, and not a violence or roughness like our own. Never was there a juster thought, or better conceived, than Otway's, however trite the passage—

"Nature formed you
To *temper* man—we had been brutes without you."

"There is no want of gallantry in this," thought Georgina, still afraid to interrupt him.

"But I own I cannot be tempered by a *fellow brute*," continued Tremaine. "No! as nothing can be more wise or more kind in respect to mutual happiness, than the division of our different provinces, so nothing can be more mistaken than for either to invade the other. But your favourite poet will give it you better in three lines than I could in three volumes:—

"For contemplation he, and valour form'd,
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him."

"Delightful!" cried Georgina, and a soft sigh, (certainly not one of pain) stole from her bosom; while she alternately looked at Tremaine and at the river, which was now silvered all over by the moon.

"I give up Miss Lyttleton!" said Georgina.

"I knew you would," said Tremaine, "for there is not the least affinity between you—nor is your heart more opposite to Mrs. Neville's than your manners to Miss Lyttleton's."

Shall we say that from this time, that good-will with which, somehow or another, with all his paradoxes, all his inconsistency, Tremaine had contrived to inspire Georgina, began to take a more soft and serious turn in her

breast?—that she felt, although there was much to correct, yet that there was also something much more congenial with herself than at least she had ever yet discovered in any other man?

The truth of history perhaps requires that we should own this, notwithstanding the certainty that awaits us of the indignation of that whole tribe of fair ones, who, just emerging into light and life, think for the most part they might as well be again immerged in darkness, (or, what is the same thing, return once more to the horrors of school,) as be consigned at twenty to the love of a man of eight and thirty.

Do not, however, let the mistake be incurred, that because there was a great deal of good-will, of mutual deference, and mutual complacency, between these parties; because they loved each other's company; because Tremaine remembered no one of the spoilt children of the world to be compared to the rosy sweetness, the natural sense, and the natural grace of Georgina; and because Georgina always saw something in Tremaine, which by seeming ready to sacrifice his very prejudices to his wish to please her, won a wish on her part to please him: do not, I say, incur the mistake that the feelings of the parties amounted to love.

Pray what then did they amount to?

To something a great deal better.

And yet, with all his years, Tremaine could still "make ballads on his mistress's eyebrow!"—could still think Evelyn Hall the prettiest view from Woodington; nay, I verily believe, could we have ascertained it, that, if a glimmer of her night-candle could have been discovered through Georgina's window-shutter, he would never have been able to retire to rest without opening his own to contemplate it; which, let me tell you, is a very critical symptom.

A pause of some minutes ensued after Tremaine's eulogium on gentleness, and while each of the trio seemed occupied with the lovely scene around them, or listening to the not unsolemn rhythm of the regular trot of the horses, (which broke but did not seem to disturb the silence of

the night,) each was engaged with his own thoughts. Tremaine felt that he had enforced a favourite principle the better for having the best practical example of it so close at his side; while that example, who, if ever woman was exempt from vanity, was spotless in that respect, could yet not help reverting every minute to the turn he had given his theory, in applying it by a delicate inference to herself. Let us confess too, (unaccountable as it may appear,) that her memory every now and then, and almost unconsciously, found itself dwelling on those emphatic words and wishes of her *protégée* Mary, in which that she should be mistress of Woodington, and consequently the inseparable companion of its master, was plainly included.

In this reverie, the carriage still rolled on—its conductors seemingly (and strangely in Georgina's mind) unconscious of the interesting scene that absorbed her—till it came to Woodington, where both drivers and horses would not unwillingly have stopt, thinking the Doctor's post-chaise would be in waiting. It however had had no orders to return, and Tremaine commanding his postillions on to Evelyn Hall, they were a little surprised, not only that their so natural expectations were disappointed, but that their master, who could so conveniently and comfortably have slipt into his own bed, (it being now past midnight,) should yet think of going on himself, merely to return alone.

These postillions were certainly not in love!

CHAPTER LI.

MR. TREMAINE IMPROVES.

Lofty and sour to them that loved him not:
But to those men that sought him, sweet as Summer.

SHAKSPEARE.

We shall not inquire whether Mr. Tremaine had any, or what dreams, when he was quietly deposited at home, after rather a softer farewell of his friends than usual, in which he not only did not disapprove, but absolutely sought the soft pressure of Georgina's hand: so easy is it for prejudice, when founded more in spleen than nature, to be overcome. It will be recollected, indeed, that in a short but very important chapter of this work, to fall in love was enumerated (together with falling into a horse-pond) as one of the cures for the spleen: and certain it is, that even the incipient symptoms of this delightful remedy (I do not mean the horse-pond) had begun already to operate upon Tremaine's disease.

What can be so interesting, said a fox-hunter, once to a politician, as a hard-run chase?

What! replied the politician—why, a hard-run division in the House of Commons!

Tremaine had tried both, and found that, like other medicines, they lost their effect by repetition. He now seemed to court his new one with every hope of success.

She is certainly, said he, at eight o'clock one morning, as he looked towards Evelyn Hall from his terrace seat, more in the perfection of her nature than any other female being I ever beheld; and her father is the worthiest, perhaps the most sensible of men.

Now a great revolution must have obviously taken place in the mind of the *fastidieux*, before all this could have happened. For, in the first place, he was not only up, but dressed, and in the air at eight o'clock. Perhaps the air was refreshing?—So it always had been!—The morning fine?—So it often had been!—Perhaps he was

without sleep?—So he generally had been!—Perhaps he had been convinced by Evelyn's arguments?—That he only sometimes had been!—What then had produced all this?—Simply an observation which had been made from the rosy lips of Georgina, that there was something so benignant in the morning air, that she not only felt better in health and spirits, but more grateful in heart to Him who sent it, and consequently more pleased and happy all the day long.

"Would not a cold-bath have the same effect?"—asked Tremaine.

"Possibly upon the spirits," answered the lady, "but not upon the heart; nor can I ever view the face of nature, smiling and fresh, and seeming absolutely to breathe, as it always does in the early morning, without feeling a sentiment of gratitude (perhaps I ought to say of devotion) towards its Author, for which I am, I hope, the better many hours afterwards."

She said this so unaffectedly, and looked so sincerely pious as she said it, that her beauty seemed to assume a new, certainly a more engaging, and even a more imposing influence, than Tremaine had ever yet felt from any other being.

He answered nothing, but thought like Comus,

> She fables not. I feel that I do fear
> Her words, set off by some superior power.

And so they were; but the power was nothing but nature, speaking in nature's accents, to one who had so long been accustomed to artificial life, that they seemed to belong to something divine.

"My God!" thought Tremaine, "that ever a cold and selfish exclusive should have been able to interest me for a single hour!"

Mr. Tremaine rose the next day at eight, to the astonishment, and the next day after also, to the consternation of Monsieur Dupuis, who, being in many particulars as refined as his master, loved to lie in bed as long, but not being as much in love with Mrs. Watson (the only person whom his self-consequence would allow him to

think of) as his master was with Georgina, the reform which took place was not submitted to, either with a good grace, or without remonstrance.

Seeing that it was continued for three mornings running, he could not help exclaiming, as he opened the windows according to order on the fourth, "Apparemment la santé de Monsieur s'est bien rétablie, puisqu'il se lève à si bonne heure."

Tremaine making him no answer, he went on, "Monsieur me paroît beaucoup changé depuis peu; et à ce qu'on dit——"

"Truce with your *on dits*," interrupted the master, who had the taste to have a horror of making a confident of his valet; "*on dits* are always impertinent."

This was said in a tone which generally silenced Monsieur Dupuis as long as he could be silenced, which was seldom more than one minute at a time. Returning therefore to the charge, he said he only meant to observe that a master he had served in France, of a weak and delicate constitution, had made himself a great deal worse by taking to rise early;—and that as to the on dit, it concerned "Mademoiselle Georgina, de qui Madame Vatson ———"

"I must desire," again interrupted Tremaine, "that neither you nor Watson will give yourselves the liberty of talking of me or my neighbours."

"C'est seulement," replied the unabashed valet, "que Vatson la trouve la plus charmante demoiselle du monde, et que l'on dit ——"

"Leave the room," cried Tremaine in a stern voice, which the valet instantly obeyed, and shaking his head as he entered the housekeeper's apartment, observed gravely that their conjectures must certainly be wrong, for as his master would not talk to him on the subject, though he had even mentioned her name, he could not possibly be in love with Miss Evelyn.

His master nevertheless took to rising early in consequence of Miss Evelyn's notions, and Miss Evelyn's advice; nay, what is more, he took to manual labour,—for he was actually detected one evening at Evelyn Hall,

(and strange to say, after dinner, though only seven o'clock,) in the very act of assisting her to water some carnations and moss roses, of which she was particularly careful. Of these flowers too he became so fond himself, that he would sometimes pass full half an hour in conference with his own gardener, upon the best mode of transplanting and rearing them in the parterre at Woodington.

And thus a change, which the force of truth, speaking through the good sense of Evelyn himself, could not produce (as has been more fully related in the course of this work), the approving smile of a winning and virtuous girl had thoroughly effected.

To shut himself up, indeed, became now no longer that fixed principle to which he had sacrificed his happiness, and almost his health; and though he could unbend as little as ever to what he called the boors, or what, in his mind, was little removed from them, mere every-day characters, (two classes which embraced, he thought, by far the greatest proportion of his acquaintance, whether in town or country,) yet the effort of mind which Evelyn's conversation constantly excited, and the sweet desire of pleasing and being pleased, excited by another (in itself sufficient happiness), left him no longer a slave to ennui.

The effect of this also was to do good in other respects, for it rendered him infinitely more agreeable where he most wished to be so. The play of his mind developed itself in a liveliness which seemed only natural to it; and the colour had returned to his cheek with earlier hours, and more regular exercise.

In this improved state, a fuller indulgence was given to the natural benevolence of his heart, to which none that were in want ever applied in vain; and his indolence being much overcome, he was even known to seek out objects of relief, as well as to relieve them. His old friend Watson, and even Dupuis, were made confidants, or rather instruments, on those occasions, and whatever was done, found its way straight to Evelyn Hall—between whose domestics and those at Woodington there was as constant intercourse as between the masters. Not

that Monsieur Dupuis' dignity condescended very often to shine upon a *mnéage* in which there was no second table. Indeed he was frequently known to lament his hard fate, in having no neighbours worthy of him, any more than his master; insomuch that it once escaped him that his master himself was the only fit companion he could find in the country: and this coming to Evelyn's ears, it was made good use of, to cure, by its ridicule, the fastidiousness which had become so burthensome both to master and man.

Between Watson, however, and Evelyn's housekeeper, or rather Georgina's maid, (for Georgina herself was housekeeper in chief,) there had always been intimacy, and frequent visiting; and, as may be supposed, the transactions of one family were not long concealed from the other. Many traits of generosity on the part of Tremaine were therefore promulgated without his knowing it, in the quarter where, had he been a designing man, he would most have wished to have had them published—so high did they raise him where he most wished to be raised.

In short, all that Watson knew was naturally conveyed to Georgina's maid, and as naturally through her to Georgina herself. It was not that the young lady encouraged the loquacity of her attendant, or made a confidant of her; for she had too much natural dignity for such a conduct. But what she could not encourage, she was frequently not able to prevent; and Mrs. Margaret Winter having been an old servant of her mother, about her own person from her cradle, fond of her young mistress, and moreover penetrating enough to discover what was or was not agreeable to her, poor Georgina had many things to be said for her, (particularly if we add the dearth of topics in a country seclusion,) when she found herself listening as she sometimes did, if not with complacency, at least without displeasure, to the adroit tattle of her aforesaid waiting gentlewoman.

CHAPTER LII.

AN ADVENTURE.

Oh! fairest beauty, do not fear nor fly,
For I will touch thee but with rev'rent hands:
I kiss these fingers for eternal peace,
And lay them gently on thy tender side.
Who art thou? Say, that I may honour thee.
SHAKSPEARE.

An incident about this time occurred, which seemed to promise additional happiness to the life of Georgina; for young, sanguine, and innocent, her heart was easily wrought upon to confide in the expectation of whatever her reason and fancy combined to make her hope; nor had she yet been taught by any experience, that what her heart had fair ground to rely upon could ever fail.

It was in a glowing forenoon in August, when she was returning on horseback from a visit to her aunt, at the town where, as we have formerly mentioned, the sessions were held. Her father having been detained on business, and the distance not great, she had set out attended only by a servant; and the season being hot, she was tempted to explore a way she had heard of, but never knew, through an extensive and shady wood, not many miles distant from Evelyn Hall. The groom was as ignorant of it as herself, but accustomed always to act, and perfectly mistress of the geographical points of the country, she thought there was no difficulty but what she could easily overcome. Her father was rather pleased with this sort of disposition to act for herself.

On this occasion, however, the road being composed of different horsepaths, of which there were many crossing one another in different directions, and the wood so umbrageous, that she could scarcely see the sun,

so as to know the points of the compass, she became entangled in the labyrinth.

She consulted indeed with the faithful John; but except in fidelity, John was very little to be relied on—and least of all in a matter that required intelligence. In this emergency, after riding for some time, she was not a little pleased to observe, at the end of a sort of avenue in the wood, a house—or rather as it appeared, the remains of one—whose chimney gave the only sign that it was inhabited; for not a creature, whether human or otherwise, seemed to belong to it. Every thing about it seemed to partake of the stillness of the scene in which it was placed; for not a sound, except now and then the note of a bird, which the heat seemed also much to repress, was to be heard.

While John, who had dismounted, was on the quest for intelligence, she had leisure for a nearer survey of the place, which small and even deserted as it had at a distance appeared, now let in a deeper front with a better air, and a ground plot elegantly kept; from the neatness of its turf and gravel walks, its benches, and its flowers, it seemed a little fairy land.

"I wish the fairy herself would appear," thought Georgina, "for I think I should like to know her, exclusive of having lost my way."

Georgina had been so accustomed to call at all the cottages in the neighbourhood, where she was not only well known, but beloved, so that every door opened with gladness at her approach, that it never occurred to her to suppose she was doing any thing out of the common course in thus riding up to a strange house. Besides, a traveller who has lost her way is protected by all laws of hospitality even amongst the most barbarous. Add to this, what after all we must not disguise, that a little spice of romance warmed sometimes the young bosom of this natural girl,—and her curiosity might be thought pardonable—by any one but an exclusive.

She was therefore a little shocked, as well as disappointed, to hear a voice of no very sweet tone—scolding rather than informing John of his way. It proceeded

from a sort of old cook-maid, who now made her appearance.

"As for your losing yourself," said she, "don't believe nothing about it, not I; and I don't see how any body could find us out that did not know the way better than I do myself, who am not of these parts."

By this time, however, perceiving Georgina, whose mere appearance conciliated instant good-will, she dropped a courtesy, and said, "To be sure I find he speaks the truth, and belongs to a lady, but I am sorry I can't inform your ladyship, for I comed from a great distance myself and never heard of Iflin Hall."

"May I ask," said Georgina with great sweetness, "whether your mistress is at home? I dare say she can tell."

"La! no, Ma'am," returned the dame! "they be out, and if they was not, they knows still less than me; and besides they would be extremely sorry—that is, I dare say they would be glad to see your ladyship, if they knew you, but ——"

"But what?" asked Georgina, observing her to pause.

"They never sees nobody, nor likes to be seen."

"May I not inquire their name?" said Georgina.

"Dear me, no! for they told me not to answer any questions about them, if any body comed, and as for that, I am sure I don't know their names myself, they be so hard to pronounce, and so I am sorry to beg to go back to my work, and I am sorry I can't tell you the way."

So saying, the faithful but abrupt female retreated to the house, the door of which she closed with a violence which shewed that nothing more was to be expected from her.

Georgina was now in a real dilemma, not at all lessened by the change in the sky, in which large and heavy clouds had been gathering, and were now ready to burst over her head in all the drenching force of a summer storm. Some poultry that had been feeding on the green sward denoted their expectation of it, by

flying to their sheds near the cottage, where they drew up as it were in self-defence; and flocks of birds were seen in the air crossing the glade, in search of the deepest shelter of the forest. At length a thunder-cloud broke with a dreadful crash, and the rain descended in a torrent which in one instant soaked both the lady and her groom through and through

Georgina was not unused to this, and had she at all known her way home, would not have minded riding through it; but to scamper in a storm through paths, the direction of which was absolutely unknown, and which might have rendered every exertion worse than unavailing, by leading her farther and farther from the home she sought—all prudence forbade it—she therefore resolved to alight, and inhospitable as the cottage had hitherto been, to ask an asylum against the continued rain; and as there was no time to hesitate at the door, she directed the man with the horses to seek a neighbouring barn, and proceeded herself round the building, till she found and entered the kitchen.

The dame who there presided, though her fidelity to orders made her appear rugged, was not really unkind; and seeing a delicate young creature of superior mould, and a sweetness of countenance which immediately made friends, dripping wet, and apparently in distress, she, with many lack-a-daisies, begged her to come in and dry herself; in order the better to do which she proposed to her to pull off her habit, which was immediately hung to the fire.

Meantime the courteousness of Georgina's demeanour, in gratitude for the old woman's attentions, won upon the latter to such a degree, that she lost all her reserve in kind fears for her safety.

"Well," said she, "I declare if you be'nt as nice as our Miss; and a whiter skin; and as young too! Pity you should take cold; yet I fear it, for your handkerchief is all wet. Well, I have a great mind to get you some of Miss's things, till your's be dried."

Georgina felt really the necessity of something of the sort, but to avoid the difficulty which the old woman

seemed to have about it, she proposed to her to lend her a clean handkerchief of her own. To this the hostess assented; not but what Miss, she said, would be glad to lend her all the things she had; and she had drawers full of muslins and laces: only as she was not at home, and hated strangers so much, she was timersome about it.

She now began to think that the kitchen was not a proper place for a young lady, who was evidently of higher order. Forgetful therefore of her former stiffness, she said such a young lady as she ought not to stay in the kitchen, and fairly invited her into the parlour, till she had made an end of drying her things.—"Mayhap they may all be ready by the time the storm is over, and you gone before mistress comes home," said the old woman.

"Will you not tell them then of your kindness?" asked Georgina.

"Perhaps I may tell Miss," returned she, "she would so like you if she seed you, but I am afraid Mistress would be angered, though for all that she be good enough."

"You have then two ladies," said Georgina, looking round the room, and observing books, a tambour, and a harp: "are they sisters?"

"No!"

"Mother and daughter perhaps?"

"I don't know," said the old woman: "Miss calls the other Mamma, but only sometimes, and they are not a bit like, though very fond."

"You must not suppose me impertinent," said Georgina, "but as I live a very few miles from them, and they seem strangers, my father, Dr. Evelyn, and myself, would be extremely glad to know, or be of use to them if we could."

"Your ladyship is good," answered the servant, "but I know they won't know nobody."

"Are they not dull?" asked Georgina, perceiving her companion hesitating whether to talk or not.

"Sometimes I suppose they be, but they have enough to do in reading them books," pointing to a table covered with them.

Georgina, seeing one of them open, could not help taking it up, and found it to be a Tasso, very elegantly bound, and in the first leaf saw in a beautiful female hand the words, *Il dono del suo carissimo amico, a Mélainie de Montauban.*

The interest, not to say curiosity of Georgina, was much raised at this; but as the old woman could not read, she the less perceived it.

"And who plays the harp?" asked Miss Evelyn, after pausing a little on the book.

"Oh! both mistresses," was the answer: "indeed one teaches t'other, as indeed she does them books, and every thing else!"

"And have you no master?—"

"No! none!—and as for that, I never seed a man near the house but the gardener."

"Your mistress has no husband, and your young lady no brother?"

"I fancy not," said the woman.

"Fancy not! This is very mysterious," thought Georgina.

Every thing in the room,—the taste of the furniture, though unexpensive, the character of the books, the music, and some very pretty drawings,—all bespoke that the apartment belonged to beings of superior cultivation, and two miniatures highly finished, over the chimney, the one of an officer in the British uniform, the other of a person of a remarkable expression, in the costume of Henry the Fourth of France, particularly arrested Georgina's attention.

"Do you know who these are?" asked she.

"No! I don't understand any of them things," was the answer.

She now began to think she might be deemed impertinently intrusive, if she continued longer where she had been given to understand she would not be thought

welcome; and the storm appearing to clear away, she resumed her habit, which was now dry, and more than satisfying the old woman for her trouble, she called for her horses, in order to explore her way home.

Scarcely, however, had she left the little gate that led through the garden into the house, but she beheld, already in the avenue, the two persons who had so much excited her inquiries. At least such she supposed two ladies who were advancing towards her with a rapid, yet hesitating step.

The elegance of their movements denoted something of far greater polish than this retired forest had ever yet seen. Georgina felt awkward, and not a little surprised, when one of them, who seemed younger than the other, sprang forward like a bounding roe from the side of its mother to meet her.

Her steps were as graceful as swift; and a countenance not easily described, in which health, joy, and eagerness were blended, absolutely shone upon Georgina like a vision. Though all was tumult and the hurry of an instant, her heart could not help hoping, (and she believed what she hoped,) that it was Mélainie de Montauban.

Both ladies were confused, and the countenance of the supposed Mélainie fell at once abashed and timid, when, upon a nearer approach, she discovered that Georgina was not the person she had taken her for. The eyes of the two girls, however, had met; they were eyes of corresponding intelligence and modesty, and (as they each could not help thinking, though in such a confused moment,) of corresponding kindness.

The elder lady, who had herself advanced with quickened pace, on first discerning Georgina, now also fell back, and received the hand of her young companion, who sought hers, as it were, for protection. Yet still the latter could not help, with animated interest, examining the object from which she seemed to fly. Both the strangers then turned, as if desirous of avoiding the meeting, yet hesitatingly, and doubtful what to do; while

many a side glance was given by the younger to Georgina, who now (for she could escape no other way) was, out of sheer necessity, come up to them.

Observing their evident intention to avoid her, she hesitated whether to intrude still farther by apologising for her original intrusion, or to accommodate herself to their humour, by galloping off. Her disposition inclined her to the last, as least awkward of the two, but her natural politeness checked this disposition; and feeling that she really owed some explanation for being where she was, she accosted both ladies with her usual grace; at the same time her desire of explaining herself was at least not repressed, by observing that the lady who seemed to take the lead was a woman of commanding presence, uncommon elegance of form, and, though not young, of great sensibility of features. With such a woman she could not bear to be thought capable of taking a liberty.

Addressing herself, therefore, particularly to her, "I ought, I am sure," she said, "to beg pardon for the freedom I am using; but if the ladies I am addressing are the owners of the house I have just left, I cannot but thank them for the asylum it has afforded me."

The elder lady replied, with ready but distant politeness, she was happy if she had found any accommodation there during the storm.

A constrained sort of air then took possession of both speakers, and the stranger, with a bending preparation for a courtesy, rather than a courtesy itself, seemed anxious for the moment when Georgina should take leave.

That would have been instantly done, if the awakened sparkle of her young companion's countenance had not arrested Miss Evelyn's intended movement, spite of all the endeavours she thought she was making to urge on her horse.

"Can I be excused," said she, looking at her, "if I hope that the nearness of this wood to my father's house may have proved more fortunate to me, than in merely

giving me a refuge from bad weather, and that I may be allowed to profit by what I now know is in the neighbourhood?"

The young *inconnue* turned a pair of large black eyes on the face of her companion, as if entreating that such a hint might be taken; but reading no assent there, she let them fall in almost sadness upon the ground. She could not help, however, raising them again with sweetness upon Georgina, and, crossing her arms upon her bosom with inexpressible grace, curtsied her thanks. Not a word was spoken, but her manner operated like a charm upon the heart to which it was directed.

"I may at least, I hope, be allowed," continued Georgina, "to explain who it is whom your servant's hospitality has obliged. My father, Dr. Evelyn, is indeed the owner of part of this wood, and our house cannot be more than five or six miles from you."

"And you are Miss Evelyn!" said the young *inconnue*, with a look of pleasure, and an accent, not purely English, but which sounded in Georgina's ears as uncommonly soft.

The elder lady here interfered, and with grave, though graceful civility, replied, that no one, however retired, could be in that neighbourhood without having heard of the name of Evelyn. "I only hope," she added, "that if we cannot profit by such kindness, such obliging frankness as you have shewn us, it will not be imputed to our being ungrateful for the honour."

At these words, taking her young charge by the arm, she fairly obliged her to turn towards the house with her; and Georgina's only consolation was to observe that she, whom she more than ever supposed to be Mademoiselle de Montauban, more than once turned round, as if to express her regret at the separation.

Miss Evelyn was too well bred to make any further attempt at an intercourse which seemed to be so expressly forbidden; yet was so much hurt at the reception of her advances, and, at the same time, so occupied with the interesting manners of the younger stranger, that, in a

slow walk, she threw the reins on her horse's neck, letting him carry her where he would: from which situation she was only roused by John.

This personage, though a very honest lad, having no sentiment in his composition, had beheld the whole adventure (such are the different modes by which nature works) with the most entire indifference; if indeed we may say so, when the thought of his wet clothes and an empty stomach, which directed his imagination with particular pleasure to the Doctor's kitchen, can be said to be indifference. Be this as it may, he conceived it but a very natural decision that the object, for which alone they had turned out of the road, should be ascertained without farther delay: and, perceiving that her horse seemed to lead his mistress, and not his mistress to direct her horse, he made bold to ask her if "them there ladies had told her the way home?"—

This very sensible question roused Georgina from her reverie, and she owned she knew no more of the road than she did before.

"I thought so," said John, with as much respect as his wishes to be at home permitted: "and, therefore, I thinks its lucky to see that bagsman there—for them people knows more about these out-of-the-way roads than e'er a postboy of them all."

The person whom he called a bagsman was what, in politer language, is denominated a gentleman traveller. He was pushing on at a regular rate, upon a stout brisk horse, and would by no means stop at John's call; but, being overtaken, he readily told them he knew Evelyn Hall very well, as he passed it six times in every year. He, therefore, undertook to lead them through the wood into Stony Lane, a road well known both to Georgina and her groom, and which, in about five miles more, led them to the home they had been seeking.

CHAPTER LIII.

THE ADVENTURE CONTINUED.

Sir, your Queen
Desires your visitation, and to be
Acquainted with this stranger.

SHAKSPEARE.

GEORGINA was too full of her adventure not to mention it to her father the moment she saw him. She eagerly inquired whether he knew any strangers who had come lately to reside in a house in the middle of Somerville Wood? His negative answer produced an explanation, and the history she had to give,—which roused his curiosity, and it was settled that, in a day or two, both Georgina and her father should ride across that part of the wood again, and pay them a visit in form. The expectation of this delighted Georgina, and she grew impatient for the day.

"I cannot see any harm in it," said Evelyn; "it is but neighbourly. They are lonely and may want society; they are strangers and may want good offices. At any rate, they may have the refusal of us," added he, as he mounted his horse.

As they approached the place, however, eager as she was, Georgina felt a little awkward, not to say confused, at making a visit, which, to one of the parties concerned, she feared might be the reverse of agreeable; and, though supported by her father, she could not help feeling that it was her own interest about the charming *incognita* that alone had prompted the measure.

In truth, as we have observed, and it cannot be denied, this amiable girl was a little tinctured with romance. Not that romance which, as in Eugenia, was the effect of what is called novel reading, or an over indulgence of ill-regu-

lated sensibility; but merely such as was not unnatural at her age, particularly when we consider the seclusion of her life. Even if it had been of the first sort, she would not perhaps have been wholly without excuse; for the good Doctor himself was (or rather had been) a most voracious devourer of all that kind of food: and though he carefully locked it up from his daughter, whom he scarcely ever permitted to look at what he denominated trash, (meaning the common order of novels,) it was a trash to which, it was shrewdly suspected, particularly in his youth, he had had no sort of objection.

Be this as it may, we now behold his daughter, such as we have described her, and with her twenty years and no more over her head, upon the point of offering her acquaintance to two perfect strangers, without the least knowledge of their characters, or that it would be well received, if we may not rather say, with the fear that it would be ill received.

As a heroine, we are aware this must for ever let her down; nevertheless, the whole of her motives should be appreciated before she is condemned. There was, in fact, a little secret in them, which although her heart perhaps knew it very well, it had not yet dared to whisper to her understanding.

In a word, this Mélainie de Montauban (if it was she), about her own age, who would willingly have lent her all the things she had, and who would like her so if she could but see her; who had indeed actually seen her, and seemed to like her;—who was she? That she was good-natured, young, elegant, and secluded, and probably therefore desirous of a companion of her own age, appeared clear; that with such a name she could not be meanly derived was likely; that she was innocent was to be hoped: yet who was the *carissimo amico?*

It must be owned, the latter, though it a little puzzled the Doctor, weighed not a feather against the other considerations with his daughter; and the sanguine, affectionate, and perhaps too romantic Georgina, could not help believing, as she wished that she was on the eve

of realising the only want of her life, in finding a person of her own age and sex whom she might love and confide in, and call by the name of friend.

On their approach to the house, the sound of the harp, and two voices in exquisite harmony, charmed their ears and arrested their progress.

The voices proceeded from the room into which Georgina had been ushered, and the windows being open, the visitors had opportunity for a few moments to distinguish the music and the words. They composed an air which was familiar both to Evelyn and his daughter. The words were addressed

TO A NATURAL CHILD.

Oh toi, qui n'eus jamais dû naître!
Gage trop cher d'un fol amour,
Puisses-tu ne jamais connoître
L'erreur qui te donna le jour.

Que ton enfance goûte en silence
Le bonheur qui pour elle est fait;
Et que l'Envie, toute ta vie,
Ignore ou taise ton secret.

I don't like these words at all, thought Evelyn. All reflections however were spared, by their being discerned by the ladies, who had heard the trampling of the horses, and ran instantly to the windows, from which the youngest as instantly retreated.

A very well mannered and well attired *soubrette* came to the little gate, to ask their commands; and as the ladies, from having been seen, could not well be denied (at least not in a forest in Yorkshire), upon asking if they were at home, the party were admitted. To Georgina's concern, however, upon being shown into the sitting-room, they were received by her cold acquaintance alone; for the touching and intelligent *inconnue* had fled, or been forced to fly.

The Doctor, with a mixture of frankness and ceremony, which was sometimes not unbecomingly blended in him, made his obeisance to the lady of the house.

"I am come, Madam," said he, "though I have not even the honour of knowing your name, to return you my best thanks for the refuge your house was so kindly allowed to afford my daughter."

"My name," said the lady, with polite but not over-warm civility, "is Rochford; and I shall always feel pleasure that anything belonging to me could give accommodation to Miss Evelyn. I have however no right to assume even the small merit of receiving her, since I had not the pleasure of being at home when the storm overtook her."

"The merit of servants," answered the Doctor, "is always that of their employers. I have, however, I own, another motive for doing myself this honour, a little less disinterested I fear than gratitude."

Mrs. Rochford not perceiving his meaning, he added with an air of gallantry, "though in the midst of neighbours, we know all the value of comparison, and have sufficient relish for refined and elegant society to court it whenever it appears. We are fortunate, therefore, in the forms of the world," continued he, "which enables us as old inhabitants to pay our respects (without I hope being thought too forward) to those who are so good as to settle among us."

Mrs. Rochford was softened by his address, and by the speaking looks of Georgina, which seemed to second it, and replied in terms, which, though guardedly general, showed that she possessed the ease and *ton de la parfaitement bonne compagnie*. After this the conversation languished, the lady of the house shewing no disposition to keep it alive; when Georgina, vexed at not being allowed to see her wished-for friend, fairly asked if she might not be permitted to pay her compliments to the young lady she had before seen.

"To see her once," added Georgina, "is only to wish to see her again, and as we had a glimpse of her at the window as we came up, I both presume as well as hope that Miss Rochford is not ill."

"Her name is not Rochford," answered Mrs. Rochford, coolly; "and she is so young, so little used to company,

so occupied, and indeed so methodical in her studies, that I trust you will not take it ill if she does not break a rule by appearing in society."

"And yet so formed to add to its pleasures!" said Georgina, with a look of mortification and surprise.

"All in good time," observed Mrs. Rochford, with an air of decision, mixed with civility; "she is yet extremely inexperienced."

"There is no keeping these young ladies back," said Evelyn, smiling significantly. "Miss Evelyn there has been as eloquent in her praises, as she is eager to cultivate her acquaintance: she tells me she is about her own age, and we must not wonder, therefore, if she thinks her quite fit for the world."

Mrs. Rochford with seriousness replied, she believed her to be much younger, and they were sensible of the honour Miss Evelyn did them; but she showed no marks of relenting in her decision.

"Can we not prevail?" said Evelyn, looking at the harp, and the music-books still open. "We have at least something in common between us, for we are all musicians. Music has often been blamed for levelling ranks too much, and introducing us into bad company; it will be extremely hard if it may not be allowed to make some expiation, by lending itself as a link to good."

"I am really distressed," said Mrs. Rochford, "to appear so ill-bred, so insensible to what I feel a very high honour both to myself and this young lady; but I am sure I need not impress upon a gentleman of your character and good sense, either the value of good rules, or the folly of breaking them."

She said this with a gravity which put an end to all farther attempt to gratify the favourite object of Georgina; who, with her father, soon afterwards took her leave, and was allowed to depart by Mrs. Rochford, not only without opposition, but without that lady having expressed the smallest wish that the intercourse should be renewed.

They returned home, each in silent meditation upon the event of their visit, and each endeavouring to explain

its mystery, according to their own notions. Georgina imagined that something remarkable, but wholly consistent with innocence, hung over the fate of her wished-for friend: her father thought there might be reasons for this strictness, not over creditable to the younger stranger, and still less to the elder. His reasons, however, he kept to himself.

CHAPTER LIV.

MORE AND MORE MYSTERIOUS.

> But whatsoe'er you are.
> Who, hid in desert inaccessible,
> Under the shade of melancholy boughs,
> Lose and neglect the creeping hours of time.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

Georgina's disappointment weighed upon her mind for some days, and was not lessened by her not seeing Tremaine during the interval; nor was her curiosity to know the reason of this at all cured, by being informed by her father (who went over to Woodington on purpose to visit him), that he had gone to York, upon what business nobody could tell; and when to return nobody had been informed. "I am glad, however," said Evelyn, "to find he is so active as to think of any business at all."

The fourth day after the visit to the house in Somerville Wood, Georgina was surprised by the following letter, which the butler who delivered it told her had been brought by a gardener-looking man, who said it required no answer.

"To Miss Evelyn.

"An imperious sense of duty must weigh so much with a lady who, herself, performs every duty so well,

that Miss Evelyn will, I trust, excuse a liberty in thus addressing her, which yet I have a thousand fears in taking. Your politeness to myself, your kind interest about the amiable child over whom I watch with all a parent's solicitude, your father's attentions and admirable character, all conduce to make this effort one of the most painful I ever resolved upon; nor is it the least difficulty I have to struggle with, that she whose heart would seek yours, both from what she has heard and what she has seen, is penetrated with grief at the decision. Strange, however, and bold as it may appear, I am compelled to forego the honour which you condescend to design for us, in your valuable acquaintance; and all that I can hope from this explanation is, that you will acquit me of what, believe me, I do not deserve, an indifference to its favour or an insensibility to its worth. I might with perhaps less awkwardness have obtained my object, by profiting by the ceremonial of the world, and not returning your visit. But though my duty to another might then have been equally performed, it would have been so at the expense of what I owe to myself; which would have been miserably neglected, if I had left such a person as Miss Evelyn to imagine me, what I never can be,

"The ungrateful
"CAROLINE ROCHFORD."

"Somerville Wood,
August 10th, 1814."

To describe the interest, the emotion of Georgina on reading this letter, would not be easy. The mingled candour and mystery that belonged to it combined to fill her with surprise, and at the same time concern. She immediately sought her father, her counsellor in all difficulties, and asked him what he thought of it?

"Think of it!" said he, "why as I must of everything that belongs to your strange sex, for you are all of ye inexplicable. Seriously, however, the letter is a good letter, and I shall be very glad if the lady is a good lady; but all this we must leave to time."

"Meanwhile," said Georgina, with sadness, "all my hope of Mélainie, if she be Mélainie, must be given up."

"I fear so," returned Evelyn: "you would not be so uncivil as to force your acquaintance."

"The letter," replied Georgina, "no where looks as if it would be rejected on its own account."

"I should be surprised, my love, if it did," said Evelyn, "for your friendship, girl, would do honour to an empress."

Georgina, affected, kissed her father's hand, and observing her concern, he bade her be quiet till he had at least discovered who these ladies were; "and I think," said he, "I may get some clue to it, when Tremaine returns, for I know at least the house which they inhabit belongs to him." Then, added he, laughing, "Mrs. Rochford is still a very handsome woman; and who knows that there may not be perhaps in contemplation a nearer connection between them than we are aware of?"

The doctor spoke in jest; but these words, somehow or another sunk, deep into the mind and heart of Georgina.

CHAPTER LV.

MOST MYSTERIOUS OF ALL.

Rumour is a pipe,
Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures;
And of so easy and so plain a stop,
That the blunt monster, with uncounted heads,
The still discordant, wav'ring multitude,
Can play upon it.

SHAKSPEARE.

Now it happened unfortunately, that while our reverend friend had unwittingly as it were laid the train, another friend, not quite so reverend, was ready to set fire to it,

and actually did set fire to it; so that Mr. Tremaine was blown up, and already in the air before he knew where he was.

This friend was no other than Monsieur Dupuis, of honourable memory; and we proceed to detail, step by step, how great things may spring from trivial causes; and if peace were once given to Europe, and the whole kingdom of France, *grand monarque* and all, was once saved by a quarrel between two court ladies, what wonder that a marriage in private life should be retarded, or prevented altogether, by a valet-de-chambre and a waiting-maid?

We have related, that from the intimacy of the housekeepers of Woodington and Evelyn Hall, the intentions of the one family soon found their way to the other; and chiefly through the communications of Mrs. Margaret Winter; who, to do her justice, had hitherto found nothing but good to relate of Woodington and its master.

The truth of this history, however, obliges us to confess, that some communications, which about this time Mrs. Margaret had occasion to make, did not prove to the advantage of Tremaine. For as Mrs. Margaret's mind was extremely just, without ever having read Cicero, she had arrived, by a sort of natural instinct, at one of the best moral conclusions of that learned heathen; I mean, that the relater of history should not only never dare to tell a falsehood, but should not dare to conceal the truth. Hence, although she had abundantly communicated what had turned out to Tremaine's credit; such as his kindness to his tenants and servants, his paying all the expenses of a law-suit for a poor man, whose family had been oppressed by a rich neighbour, and his frequent helps to decayed gentlemen, chiefly officers who had served with him in the army; yet she at length related some traits and anecdotes, which at any time would have been disagreeable to Georgina, but which, in her present frame of mind, filled her with inexpressible concern.

Mrs. Watson, Tremaine's housekeeper, was naturally a good and grave woman, and not much more given to

canvass her superiors or neighbours, (in other words, to gossiping) than other housekeepers who have little to do generally are. She loved a little talk, but loved her Bible more; and as in her present mode of life Monsieur Dupuis was almost her only companion, and Mrs. Winter her only visiter, she had much time for her favourite study, which began very seriously to lay hold of her mind.

Her progress in religion was not quiescent; and as her own fervour increased, she was struck with the desire of communicating it to others, and far above the rest, (as in fact he most wanted it) to her coadjutor and constant inmate, Monsieur Dupuis.

We shall not stop to inquire into the reasonableness of an English protestant housekeeper, not over well educated herself, hoping to convert a careless, not to say licentious, French catholic valet de chambre to religion and virtue. We only agree in one part of her speculation, that as far as the necessity for conversion went, there could scarcely be a better subject than the one she pitched upon; for, having also much time upon his hands, he endeavoured, after Mrs. Watson's example, to fill up some of it with reading; but his subjects were generally the reverse of that good woman's; his favourite books being the *Contes de Voltaire*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *Faublas*, *La Pucelle*, and the like—if like there be to those distinguished works.

The pious Watson, 'tis true, did not understand a syllable of these studies, except as to their tendency,—which she very soon found was anything but what appertained to the improvement of morals, or the confirmation of faith. As she indeed wished to convert Monsieur Dupuis, so the valet, who was somewhat *espiégle* in his nature, thought it but a fair return of kindness to endeavour to unconvert her; and accordingly, to the best of his power, he related to her the stories, or translated the sentiments, which he found so *pétillant* in his favourite authors.

This produced reproof, and then disputes, in which the refined valet was so impenetrable to the religious house-

keeper, that in despair, as well as zeal, she threatened to complain of his principles to his master. Monsieur Dupuis was always amused at this, and bursting into laughter, "Ha! ha!" he would say, "you complain of de scholar for learn to read, to de master who teach him. Begar, my master he read all dese book himself; he tink Voltaire and Rousseau, and Monsieur Louvet, les meilleurs écrivains du monde; my master be de man of pleasure comme moi, and he no believe a word of your religion at all."

Shocked at this, as far as she understood it, the well-meaning housekeeper would ask for his authority, when he would very succinctly tell her that he had heard Tremaine over and over again give his opinions upon all these subjects, in various conversations with his friends at table, which had first set him (the valet) upon reading these authors, whom he had heard so much praised: and that as to his being a man of pleasure, he knew what he knew, but would never be *indiscret*.

Indignant at this (for Watson loved her master too well to be very patient under it), she would provoke him still more, by asserting her utter disbelief of anything he professed to know to Tremaine's discredit; till at length the discretion of the valet giving way to his vanity, he told her, to his certain knowledge, his master at that instant kept a mistress, a very beautiful woman, not many miles off, by whom he had two children, one of them a little boy at school, for whom he had actually himself been sent, when he accompanied his master to York a few days before, and that he was afterwards conveyed to his mother, to pass the summer holidays with her. Monsieur Dupuis added, that if she did not believe him, she might ask Jonathan, who had ridden there with his master last week, and had actually seen the lady. "I no see her, but Jonathan say she was ver prit, only leetel too old."

Struck with this intelligence, the still doubting housekeeper took the first opportunity to ask the groom what he knew, who told her very fairly that he knew very little, only that he had lately attended his master to York, who sent Monsieur Dupuis to some other place for

a little boy, with whom they had all returned to within ten miles of Woodington; when Monsieur Dupuis was sent home in the carriage, while his master proceeded with the child in a hired chaise, and himself on horseback, to a house in Somerville Wood; that a mile short of the house the chaise stopped, and he (the groom) was sent on with the little boy, and a letter in the chaise, while his master waited his return in the wood; that he delivered his charge and the letter to a very handsome lady, between thirty and forty, who was accompanied by a young girl, as beautiful as the day; that they seemed overjoyed at meeting the little boy, and at receiving the letter; that the child called the young lady sister, and said he had left papa only a mile off, at which the young lady seemed much disappointed, and said, "Oh! mamma, why did he not come?"

This was all the groom knew. But it was enough, and too much, as Watson thought.

Overpowered by these circumstances of persons, time, and place, she had nothing to oppose to it, and with a sigh yielded her belief to the assertion of Monsieur Dupuis; consoling herself as well as she could, by regularly, in her prayers, remembering her master's reform.

And here the matter might have rested, for the good creature was sufficiently discreet to *intend* not to divulge it, had not that intention been opposed by a temptation which flesh and blood (at least the flesh and blood of a housekeeper) could not withstand. For what can withstand the temptation to gossip in two housekeepers over their evening tea?

"What though he is a little too old," said Mrs. Watson, as she poured it out, "I assure you he is all the fashion in London, is generally out with the gayest all the night long; and there is no young lady that would not be glad to have him. There was Miss Neville and my Lady Gertrude had like to have fit about him, and it was only stopped by his saying he would have neither on 'em. I heard it all from Lady Gertrude's own woman, who used to visit me in Berkeley Square, as you may be doing now, Mrs. Winter."

The grave *chef* of Woodington was now, however, obliged at once to confess her fears that all their speculations were wrong, and that whatever Miss Georgina might feel, Mr. Tremaine neither had, nor ever could have, any thoughts of her.

"He may go farther, and fare worse," said Mrs. Winter, with something like indignation; but upon being informed of the reasons for her ally's supposition, and her authority for those reasons, she was forced to allow their cogency, discovered an evident impatience to get home, and when at home, an equal impatience for her mistress's bell at night—when during the few minutes' attendance which Georgina's undressing required, the most favourite, or at least the most confidential period of this gentlewoman's life generally occurred.

We will pass, in our hurry to come to other matters, the mode in which the faithful Winter, jealous for her own as well as her lady's honour, (for Winter assumed to herself the credit of a great deal of Tremaine's footing with Georgina,) first led to the subject, and afterwards made the communication in question. It is sufficient that Tremaine, on the authority of Winter, Watson, Dupuis, and Jonathan (enough to sink down any poor devil at the Old Bailey), was convicted before Georgina of having a mistress, or a concealed wife, and two children, eight or ten miles off; and Georgina was deprived of her entire night's rest in consequence of the news.

Having sighed to her pillow upon it for many hours, she was forced to confess that the mystery of the Somerville Wood House was now cleared up, and that her father's loose hint was dreadfully confirmed.

Two whole days she pondered this matter, and two whole days she saw not Tremaine. The young heart of Georgina never before knew so much of itself. Winter was not only not repressed, but even encouraged to talk of the subject; at least as far as perfect attention went; for though she professed to say she supposed it mere idle gossip, and not possible to be true, she listened with profound interest to all the proofs which Winter brought, to show that it could not be false.

In the midst of these doubts, a letter from her new friend, or rather acquaintance, Mrs. Neville, plunged her into fresh difficulties.

It began by a very cordial invitation to the races at D——, which were to be uncommonly well attended, and where she made a point, she said, of assembling as much beauty, elegance, and talent, as her influence would permit; that her party was made, but could not be perfect without Georgina. "I would also," she added, "ask your neighbour Mr. Tremaine, but really he has of late grown so uncouth, and towards me so capricious, that he gives me no encouragement: besides, from what I hear of him, I fear more than ever it would be entreaty thrown away. The reports are indeed most strange about him, though very inconsistent with one another. One is, that he has long been either secretly married, or has entertained a mistress, who has followed him from Northamptonshire, and by whom he has two children. As to the marriage, I have reason to believe that false, whatever the other may be. But what is most confidently said is still more surprising. He was always, you know, eccentric—thinking and acting like no other man. No woman of his acquaintance comes up, it seems, to his standard as a wife; yet a wife he is resolved to have ('tis time at least!); and I am credibly informed he is now engaged in the romantic and nonsensical task of educating a young girl (nobody knows who), for the express purpose of loving him, and making in time a suitable companion for so very great a man. This, as both he and his fair Indiana are in your neighbourhood, you probably know, and I shall be gratified by hearing the particulars. I must say, however, if true, Lady Gertrude Bellenden has been most shamefully used by him. You of course know all that affair. At any rate, I would have my dear Miss Evelyn, be on your guard against this Mr. Bevil*, who, though he affronts half the sex by his high demands upon them, only gives himself

* Alluding, I suppose, to the romantic Bevil and Indiana of "The Conscious Lovers."—Editor.

the more consequence with those whom he does condescend to distinguish; and report says (which who can be surprised at?) that of all the fair damsels to whom he has offered his attentions, none ever occupied him so much as his charming neighbour, with the exception of the poor devoted thing to whom I have alluded. Be assured however, that Mr. Bevil, with all his sentiment, is a most fickle being, and I pity the young creature he has immured only perhaps to send her back into the world disappointed and unhappy."

Poor Georgina was in a labyrinth of contending conjectures, upon the receipt of this letter. Was the young *inconnue*, who had so much touched her heart, fated then to destroy its growing and happy feelings towards the only person for whom she had yet felt anything like partiality? or was she a daughter, and not an intended wife—and if so, was the accomplished Mrs. Rochford, either as wife or mistress, the possessor of his affections? —Which of them, or was either of them, Mélainie de Montauban?

These were puzzling questions:—

"Ah!" exclaimed Georgina, "whether as a mistress or an intended wife, it is evident some other female . . . ."

The thought, unaccountably to herself, made her heart sick, and at last burst from her lovely eyes in tears, as precious perhaps as innocence in distress ever yet shed. She felt ashamed, however, and soon recovered, but was plunged the whole morning in a reverie, which did her no good, and which only escaped her father's observation from his being out upon some county business, during the greatest part of the day.

Arrived at home, he was struck with the most serious concern, at observing a sadness on the brow of his loved girl, which he had never before witnessed. Two questions drew the whole from her; for not only were there no secrets between these two persons, so endeared both by relationship and love to each other, but Georgina felt a relief to her swollen heart, by instantly giving the confidence desired.

The trembling, or at least blushing interest she

evidently took in Mrs. Neville's letter, confirmed as it was by Winter's communication, inspired the good Doctor indeed with a thought which did not occasion him less uneasiness, because it had never struck him before, or because it now sprang into his mind, accompanied with all the mortifying drawbacks which this story (now confirmed on all sides) presented to his belief. To think of it under either of the shapes presented, embarrassed him; but to think of it with the influence he began to fear it might have on his daughter's happiness, absolutely afflicted him. He became as serious as Georgina herself; and when they parted for the night, he resolved upon two things,—to ascertain the exact state of his daughter's heart, and to clear up, at any cost, the whole mystery that hung over Mrs. Rochford and her daughter, if her daughter she was. The first he deferred for a proper opportunity, fully aware of all that delicacy and affection required of him; and the last he determined to proceed upon without delay.

CHAPTER LVI.

DECISION.

> This above all, to thine own self be true,
> And it must follow, as the night the day,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

And how did he proceed upon it?

In the very spirit of his character: for with that straightforwardness which belonged to him, having desired Georgina to give him Mrs. Neville's letter, he resolved to lay it at once before his friend, and to leave him to give his confidence upon it, or not, as he pleased.

This indeed was a very simple method, and (as many

people will think) not at all worthy of a man of his abilities and endowments: it was what any child might have hit upon. But in fact, with all his endowments, we are forced to confess that in simplicity of heart, Evelyn was a child.

What he so promptly resolved he soon endeavoured to perform; for an opportunity arose the very next day, by a self-invitation to dinner, which Tremaine sent over in the morning to Evelyn Hall.

The Doctor determined in that very visit to sound him, and acquainted Georgina with his determination.

"And yet," said he, "I know not the right we have to force his confidence."

"None at all," said Georgina.

"It is material, however," continued he, "to settle it; for if there is a mistress in the case, the freedom of our intercourse will not be so proper."

"Certainly not," said Georgina, firmly.

Tremaine came with the *empressement* with which he had always come of late; lamented that he had been separated from them for so many days; and declared that he never liked absence so little, and had flown home with a pleasure he had seldom felt.

"I am at least glad of your resumed activity," said the Doctor: "your business, however, must have been important, to have taken you to York!"

"It was a little duty I had to perform," answered he, "and I trust neither of you will quarrel with me for having so well profited by the lessons you have given me. You see," and here he fixed his eyes on Georgina, "I venture to suppose I have a mistress, as well as a master, in practical philosophy."

Mistress was a word which Georgina never liked so little; she looked grave, and was silent.

"A mistress!" exclaimed Evelyn, in a kind of ejaculation, half to himself, half aloud.

A constrained sort of pause ensued, in which Tremaine thought both his friends appeared to have something on their minds.

The dinner being over, and Georgina withdrawn,

"Pray," said Evelyn, after a little thought, "is not a house in Somerville Wood, in which two ladies have come to reside, a late purchase of yours?"

"If you mean an old house, newly sashed, at the end of the avenue," replied Tremaine, with a good deal of surprise, "it is."

"You are acquainted, I suppose, with your tenants?" continued the Doctor.

"All good landlords ought to be," answered the catechist, with, however, increasing wonder. "But pray, may I ask in my turn, why these questions? Are you acquainted with them yourself?"

"My daughter has found them out," answered Evelyn.

"Found them out!"

"Yes! and introduced me, to them, and a very scurvy reception they gave us."

"This is most extraordinary," said Tremaine, with evident signs of uneasiness.

Evelyn then proceeded to relate Georgina's adventure, and the impression which the younger lady had made upon her: "Now, I, for my part, not having seen her, could not help admiring the elder, who said her name is Rochford."

"She is," said Tremaine, "a very superior woman; I have known her many years."

"We are, however," observed Evelyn, "anxious, particularly my daughter, to know the name of her young companion."

"And did not Mrs. Rochford tell you," said Tremaine.

"She was so exceedingly reserved," said Evelyn, "that Georgina did not dare to ask."

"Her name," replied Tremaine, recovering his tranquillity, "is Mélaine de Montauban."

"Foreign, I presume?" observed Evelyn.

"One of her parents is French," returned Tremaine; and he said no more.

Another pause ensued, which lasted some minutes.

"My good friend," said the Doctor, "I meant not to be as impertinent as I fear I have been. The interest which these charming women have excited in my daughter

has led me, I see, too far. I beseech you to excuse it. I certainly have no right to pry into secrets."

"I have no secrets," said Tremaine, and they again were silent. The Doctor had said enough for his friend to open if he would. It was friendship, not curiosity, that had made him speak, and finding the overture not taken, he changed the conversation.

At coffee, Tremaine was absent and Georgina constrained. Each seemed glad that Evelyn began to talk upon gardening, in which they allowed him to have all the talk to himself. Tremaine looked over some new music, and Georgina, at an open window, was busy with a rose-bush on the outside, which, for the life of her, she could not settle to her liking.

At length Tremaine took his leave.

The eyes of Georgina were immediately turned upon her father.

"I have not succeeded," said he, "except to discover that he has known Mrs. Rochford long, speaks highly of her, and that your young friend is half French."

"Half French!" cried Georgina.

"Yes! that is, one of her parents is of that nation, and she is Mélainie de Montauban."

"Oh! this *carissimo amico!*" thought Georgina. She looked again at her father.

"I know no more," said he, "I could not try to make a man speak of his own affairs against his will."

"My dear father," replied Georgina, "you did, as you always do, right."

"That is a very good creed for a daughter," observed Evelyn, assuming a playful aspect. He then kissed her, and, to drive away thought, proposed trying the new music; which finished the evening.

In the retirement of her chamber, Georgina taxed herself severely for the selfishness of her curiosity. "Should Mrs. Rochford be his mistress," said she, "what can that be to me, except, indeed, that such a man should so ill conduct himself? But Mrs. Rochford is not French, and Mélainie cannot, therefore, be his daughter!—May she not, however, be so by some French

lady who, alive or dead, legitimately or illegitimately, may have been bound to him."

This thought did not please. Could Mélainie herself be a mistress, and Mrs. Rochford her duenna? Impossible!—And yet why this mystery?—this seclusion?

This thought pleased still less.

Was Mélainie a wife?—fully as distressing! And yet why? There was then no dishonour; she must soon be acknowledged, and she may yet be my friend.

This reflection was consolatory, and she dwelt upon it. "I fear," thought she, "I have been sadly weak, and as selfish as weak. Mr. Tremaine is nothing to me: for his own sake, I hope there is no impropriety of conduct, and his engaging wife I am sure I shall love."

Thus did a virtuous mind bring itself round; and thus a heart that placed its happiness in loving and being loved, righted itself, after a tumult that had threatened its tranquillity, by reposing upon what it was at least certain was good, although it might be the only good in the affair.

In this train of mind, after commending herself fervently to Heaven, this excellent young creature sank into slumber, which was sweet and refreshing, and Evelyn had the happiness of seeing her, next morning, placid and cheerful, if not with her usual gaiety, at the breakfast table.

The good Doctor, though much the greater reasoner of the two, and the better philosopher, had himself not been nearly so composed. As a divine, a good shepherd, and a friend, he feared for Tremaine. If either lady were a mistress, it was his duty to interpose; duty for his own and his daughter's sake, as well as Tremaine's. If Mélainie could be an object of seduction!—too horrible for thought! Yet the world, particularly the fine men in it, were so corrupt!—In St. James's-street it would be thought nothing of; and the French school almost enjoined it!—This, however, was soon dismissed.—That she might be designed for a wife was far more probable. There was an eccentricity, if not a waywardness, in almost all Tremaine's actions, that made Mrs. Neville's report by

no means incredible. "I must send him the substance of her letter," said Evelyn.

Full of the design, he closed the study door, after ordering a servant to get ready to go to Woodington; and wrote as follows to Tremaine:—

"You, who know all the rights and duties of friendship, will, I am sure, not quarrel with me for sending you the inclosed. Left to itself, I should think it the tattle of a silly, if not the malice of a wicked woman; but coloured as in some measure it is by time, person, and place, in all that belongs to the house in Somerville Wood, both the interest I take in my schoolfellow, friend, and neighbour, and my duty to her who is the prop and solace of my life, forbid me to be silent. When I tell you that my daughter has been eager to conciliate the friendship of the ladies your tenants, ever since she saw them, that she almost rests a part of her happiness on being permitted to cultivate the interesting Mélainie, your own rectitude will forgive my asking, as far as I may, some account of these ladies. That my friend is scandalized by Mrs. Neville, and the reports of the neighbourhood, I have no doubt, and he perhaps might thank me for enabling him to put down scandal at once, by a frank explanation. My dear Tremaine will, however, distinctly understand, that explanation at the expense of either feeling or confidence is not what I seek. My simple question is, as a father, to know whether Miss Evelyn may, without impropriety, give indulgence to the prepossessions and wishes with which her new neighbours have inspired her?"

This, and a copy of Mrs. Neville's communication, with the omission of that part which related to Georgina herself, were made into a packet by the Doctor, and despatched to Tremaine.

He was hurt and perplexed at the receipt of it, which he strove at first, though in vain, to attribute to an improper curiosity. But this, not only his natural candour, and respect for Evelyn forbade, but other sentiments towards Evelyn's daughter for ever banished from his mind. The delicate, the well-judging Georgina could

never act from an impure motive; and it was evident, from her father's mode of putting it, that she in fact was interested to know the characters of persons whose acquaintance she had solicited, while all the fault and all the mischief rested with Mrs. Neville.

How often he gave that lady to the devil it is useless to inquire; how often he paced his chamber, and went in and out of doors, the better to consult his own thoughts, it is difficult to remember. It is sufficient to say, that having more than three several times begun a letter to the Doctor, for which he detained his messenger, he at last sent the man away with a verbal compliment, that he would return an answer by a messenger of his own. The whole of the morning was passed in writing, and indeed it was evening before a servant from Woodington delivered to Evelyn a packet, which we shall now set before our readers.

CHAPTER LVII.

A PLAIN TALE.

Speak it here;
There's nothing I have done yet, o' my conscience,
Deserves a corner.
Noble lady,
I am sorry my integrity should breed
So deep suspicion.

SHAKSPEARE.

"To Dr. Evelyn.

"Those who know you can never suspect you of an improper motive; those who know your daughter must be anxious to clear away every thing that may hang a cloud upon the least wish she can form. Her desire to cultivate Mélainie de Montauban, to seek her as a companion, to love her as a friend, is not only natural, but does honour to her taste. I am mistaken, were it right that their acquaintance should proceed, if happiness

to both would not be the result; but I doubt if at present their wishes can be gratified: and I feel constrained to think that Mrs. Rochford's decision is no more than proper. Accuse me not of mystery, any more than misconduct. At the same time I feel agonized that appearances should give such support to the most wicked of surmises. I know not who is most traduced, Mrs. Rochford, Mélainie, or myself. Little am I able to bear it on my own account; still less on theirs. Their purity I have sworn to defend. Is my own honour less dear to me?

"Evelyn, you know not my perplexity, I feel wounded more tenderly than perhaps you suspect; yet I dare not defend myself. With you, I might rest something upon confidence; but have I any right to that confidence from another?—that other, prejudiced as she may be by the surmises of an interested, a daring, and manœuvring woman? Can I be indifferent to my fame in a quarter which has so much of my respect? If I could bear the condemnation of the world, could I also bear that Miss Evelyn should think with that world? That world is saucy; it takes liberties with innocent women! Shall he, who can proclaim their innocence and his own, submit in silence?

"No! mere caution, which perhaps after all is unnecessary, shall not carry me so far. I depart then from my first resolution, and you shall hear a plain tale, which for ever must put to silence even appearances and surmises, much more positive slander. The friend, whose injunctions impose upon me the constraint I feel, would be the first, were he to know our dilemma, to release us from a burthen which he never foresaw would fall upon us.

"Have you ever heard me mention the name of Colonel Osmond? the preserver of my life, and, when I was in want of it, the benefactor of my fortune. Chivalry has scarcely painted a braver, a more generous, or a more delicate spirit. The latter he carries to an excess, which may one day bear hard on the happiness he deserves. Three great interests divide his heart; his country, his mistress, and his friend. His purse was mine, when I

had none of my own; his sword was mine, when I had lost my own: he pushed my promotion; he defended my life. In the field of Vimeira, where my horse was killed under me, and while, entangled by the fall, a lance was already at my heart, this Osmond, at the expense of his own blood, saved mine. 'Twas the beginning of our friendship.

"When I left the army, we corresponded by letters. He was perpetually in adventures. Upon one of them now depends his happiness or misery for ever.

"You know how the events of war, which he seemed born to control, led the most gallant of mankind beyond the bounds of the Pyrenees. His advance, however, was tracked in slaughter, and on the plains of Vittoria Osmond was again doomed to bleed. He was, indeed, left for dead on that sanguinary field, and was only saved by an apparent enemy. He was conducted to the château of the Comte de Montauban, a French nobleman, established in Spain, where he was nursed, cherished, and recovered. That nursing, as it affected his peace, so it may for ever colour his fate; for Mélainie de Montauban was his principal attendant. Her mother, an English lady of a noble house, had long been dead, and she was allowed by her father to gratify her chief pleasure, in watching over one whom she almost considered as a countryman. She was then under fifteen. Whether her young heart was touched with more than benevolence towards a wounded, and at one time a dying soldier, I know not; but his own was penetrated, first with gratitude, then with love.

"The Comte de Montauban was Bourbon in his mind, and not the less so from his English connection, and his respect for England. Colonel Osmond improved and wrought upon these dispositions. The Comte opened a correspondence with the King of France, and the cause promising success in the South, too little caution was used in veiling his design. He was seized and shot by the savage Soult; his estates confiscated, his whole family ruined.

"Overwhelmed with the sudden reverse, Osmond

beheld the wreck as if occasioned by himself: and he resolved to devote the life they had saved to the family whose kindness to him had been so fatal to themselves. The heir, a child of four or five years old, and the lovely, the touching, the orphan Mélainie, he conveyed to England.

"On the boy he settled a competent stipend: for the attracting Mélainie he had larger views. The boy has often seen me, and calls, perhaps thinks me, his father; but his sister I have scarcely permitted myself to know. In all that Colonel Osmond did he consulted me; and confided to me, as the best compensation he could make for the loss of her parent, the design of bestowing upon her his whole fortune, if at the same time he could have the happiness to persuade her to receive himself as her husband and protector for life.

"To this he was aware of all the difficulties that might be opposed; but he reduced them all to this single one—the uncertainty how far he might be able to inspire her with corresponding affection. She might be grateful indeed, but gratitude was a word he would not hear of. 'She must love,' said he, 'as if I were really and entirely her countryman; only her equal in fortune; suitable in powers of attraction, in the qualities she expects, and even in age. Without this (little as I may pretend to it), I cannot be her husband, though I will always be her friend. At the same time to open this design to her at her tender age, would only be to take advantage of her inexperience, and her grateful feelings, with which her little heart absolutely runs over; for softened as it is by misfortune, and the loss of all whom she has been accustomed to love, she has no one to fix it upon but me. Oh! that that may last!

"Reasoning in this manner, Osmond did not disguise to himself the difficulties he had also to contend with, from his personal absence on service at a time the most critical for his object. He was besides totally unprovided with a proper asylum for her, from having neither mother nor sister; and powerfully felt the necessity there

was, that her education, as yet but half finished, should still be pursued.

"Consulted, confided in, by this high-minded man, my admired friend, my gallant preserver, could I be wanting to his views?—No! I entered into them. I was not unaware of the boldness of the expectation, that a girl of fifteen might be inspired with love for a man of thirty. But alas! my own age, and still romantic heart, made me hope at least that such a difference might be overcome.

"I desired him to consign both children to me. I swore to be the guardian of the friendless Mélainie, to watch over her safety, her improvement, and her fame, with the vigilance of a father; and meantime I had the good fortune to associate Mrs. Rochford in my views. This lady, whom slander has never yet touched, I had remembered as the widow of an officer of rank, known both to me and to Osmond. The superiority of her talents, her sense, and her worth, added to the slender portion with which her husband had left her, pointed her out as designed almost by Providence for our object.

"I asked and obtained leave to confide to her the hopes, the romantic hopes of my friend. She readily and kindly undertook to second them, and what she undertook she has faithfully performed. After the first interviews with Mélainie, on yielding her to Mrs. Rochford, I made a point never to see her again: for, mindful of the tender, the sacred duty I had undertaken, I suggested to the latter lady the propriety of keeping her pupil in the most absolute retirement, and above all of secluding her, until my friend's return, from the society of men. Single, unengaged, and romantic myself, could I do this with such views, and permit my own visits?

"It is now near two years since this plan has been prosecuted. During the whole of that time, Colonel Osmond has cultivated the mind, and I believe the affection of his young charge, by letters. He is expected every instant. No man has hitherto interfered with him; and we hope to obtain the only end we have

proposed by delivering her up to him, at least free from all prepossession.

"Such is the outline of a story, on which malice, or wicked indifference to truth or falsehood, has built so much. Whether we may not have been too strict in declining for Mélainie the society of her own sex as well as ours, may be made a question; but Mrs. Rochford's fears that the one would certainly bring the other along with it, and her anxiety to fulfil her engagement with Colonel Osmond, who has been her very great benefactor, have made her scrupulously exact in adhering to her plan, and caused an apparent coldness to the overtures of the most amiable young creature that ever God made.

"To that excellent creature, and to her alone, I permit you to extend the confidence of this letter, and if it has satisfied you, I suppose I may have the pleasure of soon seeing you again."

CHAPTER LVIII.

SATISFACTION.

He is complete in feature and in mind,
With all good grace, to grace a gentleman.

SHAKSPEARE.

"And what do you think of it?" said Evelyn to his daughter, who read over his shoulder.

"Think of it?" replied Georgina, with her eyes suffused, "that he is one of the noblest and most delicate of men!"

"I agree," said Evelyn, almost equally affected; "we have done him wrong."

"Oh! how much!" cried Georgina; and her eyes could not restrain a flow of tears, that were the signs of sweet remorse. They fell plentifully down her cheek, nor did her father seek to check them.

"My dear love," said Evelyn, "I cannot blame, I could almost join you;" and his own eyes caught the sympathy: "it is certain he is a very noble fellow!"

Georgina assented in a silence which lasted some minutes.

Recovering herself, "How I wish," she exclaimed, "for Colonel Osmond's arrival! I am sure I shall like him: I think he need not be afraid of Mélainie."

"Why so?" asked the Doctor.

"He is so noble, so generous!"

"But he is above thirty!"

"If he were more, that would be nothing."

Evelyn gave his daughter a penetrating look, which called up a little colour to her cheeks. She however had no concealment, for she immediately added, "besides ————," but consciousness perhaps would not let her go farther.

"Besides what?" asked Evelyn good-humouredly.

"He saved Mr. Tremaine's life," said Georgina.

"A very good reason why Mademoiselle de Montauban should marry him," returned the Doctor.

Georgina's confusion increased.

"We have injured our friend very much," pursued Evelyn.

"Terribly!" said Georgina.

"And I long to make him the *amende honorable*," concluded he, ringing the bell.

"How?"

"By riding over to him this instant, and begging his pardon."

His horse was soon at the door, and with himself soon after at Woodington, where the two friends embraced; and the Doctor did not return home till after a long conversation, in which amongst other things that passed, it was resolved that Tremaine should influence Mrs. Rochford to relax in favour of Georgina (though of her alone), the strictness of her rule; and the tidings were conveyed that night to Georgina; a night which, on more accounts than one, she passed very differently from the last.

In truth Tremaine's explanations were not confined to Mélainie. There were other parts of Mrs. Neville's letter which filled him with indignation, and he expressed it in no measured terms. His expressions indeed were at first very general, but amounted to little short of execration.

"I observed your dislike to this lady at Lord Bellenden's," said Evelyn, "yet she seemed no common person, and not made for the churlishness you showed her."

"My churlishness no doubt surprised you, and I am afraid Miss Evelyn too."

"It did: and I will fairly own to you we thought you capricious. I now believe I was wrong."

"You were indeed," said Tremaine: "and though I pretend not to justify churlishness to a woman in any case, you shall judge whether I could feel the friend of such a woman."

He then related all that has been related already of Mrs. Neville's manœuvres, and their detection, and then asked if Evelyn himself could be at all at his ease in her company?

"I think I could," said Evelyn.

"You are an absolute stoic, with your philosophy."

"Not in the least. I am rather Epicurean; for if I could be easy, it would be merely because the woman is not worth a thought."

"Yet she has power, influence, and, above all, the advantage of being plagued with no principle," said Tremaine.

"A mere managing mamma, with all her riches," replied his friend. "If you mind such things in the world, I begin not to be surprised that the world has such an effect upon you. What I *am* surprised at in a man of your experience, is the ease with which you were taken."

"I knew not her character," said Tremaine, "and I respected a mother anxious for her child."

"I believe," said Evelyn, shaking hands with him, and about to depart—"I believe you have an excellent heart."

"Can you do this," answered Tremaine, and he looked

up as if hesitating to proceed, "when there are other parts of this she-devil's letter unexplained, which yet contain an express accusation, that I have used another young woman of birth and fashion, and, as the world say, of merit, shamefully ill?"

"Lady Gertrude Bellenden?" said Evelyn.

"The same."

"Why I there also observed something extraordinary in your conduct; and I thought it the more so, because she was not only beautiful, but fashion itself.

Tremaine coloured, but exclaimed, "How little do you, does any one, know me!",

"My dearest friend," said Evelyn, mildly, "do you know yourself?"

"Yes, enough to be certain of one thing, that beauty and fashion alone will never make a man happy: add to it, a cold selfishness, ignorance, and hardness of heart, and what would you think of it?"

"The answer is not difficult," said Evelyn.

"Then you have Lady Gertrude before you," observed Tremaine.

"Good Heavens!—the designed friend of my daughter?"

"It must be owned they are a little different," continued Tremaine—"light and darkness are not more opposite than the elements that compose them."

"Poor Lady Bellenden!" said Evelyn; "but are you sure this is not prejudice?"

"Judge for yourself," answered Tremaine; and he laid before Evelyn all he had been disposed to feel for Lady Gertrude—the experiments he had made of her mind and heart, and the result of those experiments.

"I cannot blame you," observed Evelyn.

"Then I am satisfied," said Tremaine; and the friends separated.

"This *Mr. Bevil* is a very extraordinary person," pursued Evelyn to his daughter, when he had communicated these particulars to her on his return home. "I think he is made for good if he choose, and we certainly have done him good.'

"There *was* then something between him and Lady Gertrude," said Georgina.

"And does that move you?" asked her father.

"Only my curiosity," replied Georgina: "I certainly have been alive to it since I saw them together at Bellenden House."

"And what was your judgment?"

"That Lady Gertrude was not indifferent about him."

"Young ladies, I suppose, understand these matters; but how a girl of twenty could have any interest about a man of forty ———"

"My dear papa, he is but eight and thirty."

"To be sure," said Evelyn, "that makes a great difference; I had forgotten that."

Georgina blushed. Her father kissed her, and they separated for the night, each with their little anxieties, mixed with some sweetness, to which, with Georgina at least, the sweetness greatly predominated.

CHAPTER LIX.

NAÏVETÉ.

> Oh! fair Katherine, if you will love me soundly,
> With your French heart, I will be glad to hear you
> Confess it brokenly with your English tongue.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

THE result of the adventure of Somerville Wood was, for some time, happy for Georgina, for she was allowed to cultivate Mélainie as much as she could wish; and often did she stroll with her, arm in arm, in the avenue leading to the cottage, with all the familiarity and confidence of an old friend. It was an intercourse very sweet to her heart, which expanded with a delight that was new to it.

It was equally so with Mélainie; who, no more than Georgina, had ever known a friend of her own age.

"It seems quite my country," said she, talking one day of England, "for I never knew France, where I was born, and all I ever loved best are English—you among them."

"Dear Mélainie," said Georgina, "but have a care not to love so entirely without experience. How do you know I shall deserve it?"

"Do you not love me?" asked Mélainie, gravely.

"Oh, yes!"

"How then can I be wrong? Besides—Mr. Tremaine—"

"What of him?"

"He told Mrs. Rochford, before we saw you, that if Heaven had found a friend for me, whom he would wish me to love, and be like, it was you."

"Did Mr. Tremaine say this?" asked Georgina.

"Yes, and I am sure he was very right, for I feel as if I could like you better than anything in the world."

"Not in the world," answered Georgina, archly; for you have undoubtedly as good, or better, and older friends."

"Yes!" said Mélainie, and sighed.

"Why that sigh?"

"I often sigh," replied the artless girl, "when I think of some of them."

"Is not that strange?" observed her companion; "especially if they are so good."

"Yes! indeed they are good! but they are far away."

"Are you thinking of your second father?" asked Georgina.

"I am thinking of Colonel Osmond," answered Mélainie; "but though he has been one to me, I do not like to call him father."

"And why not?" said Georgina, with more archness still.

"I would rather think of him as my brother," replied Miss de Montauban. "When I attended him in his

terrible wound, I always thought him so. He was not at all like my father the Count—he was so gay and lively, even though sick: but when he got well, his spirits were like those of a youth—even of a French youth."

"Then he does not resemble his friend Mr. Tremaine?" said Georgina, with curiosity.

"He is not so severe, nor so sweet," returned Mélainie, not exactly appreciating her English; "but he is like him in his nobility."

Georgina, smiling at her language, could not help asking whether he resembled him in person?

"Ah! he is not so handsome, but much beautifuller."

"You love him?" said Georgina, smiling again.

"Most dearly!" replied the honest girl.

"Could you pass your life with him?" continued Georgina, hazarding more than she had at first intended.

"Too glad! but he is always at war."

Georgina would not push the matter farther, but thought that the fate of the high-spirited Osmond promised to be as happy as it deserved to be. From this she made a secret transition which she could not account for, to the subject of disparity of years; and this left her with an opinion that, young as Mélainie was, she might be a happy, as well as what is called a lucky girl, in the love and protection of such a man as Osmond.

The question was soon decided, for within a fortnight of this conversation the Colonel actually arrived. He had leave but for a month, and we may suppose how he employed it. In effect, he became so entirely to his young ward the centre of all her interest, all her admiration, that all her affection followed of course; and *naïve* and ignorant of the world as she was, she was scarcely surprised, when Mrs. Rochford told her that he had come over on purpose to offer her his hand.

This episode does not require that the reader should be farther detained with it; though it was of consequence to Georgina, who lost her pretty friend almost as soon as she had found her. Imperious duty drove Osmond back

to the armies, without having had time to do more than arrange preliminaries. It was settled that Mrs. Rochford and Mélainie should take up their abode at Brussels, to be more in his neighbourhood, and that he should seize the very first respite he could obtain, to fulfil his engagement. This was accordingly done, though it occasioned much sorrow to Georgina at parting. To Brussels Mrs. Rochford repaired with her charge, and at Brussels the contemplated ceremony was only delayed, by that which delayed enterprises of far greater pith and moment, though, to the parties, not of greater interest—the field of Waterloo.

CHAPTER LX.

ANOTHER CHARGE AGAINST MR. TREMAINE.

Leaving the fear of heaven on the left hand.
SHAKSPEARE.

Georgina was doomed yet to suffer considerable uneasiness, in regard to many things that related to the person who had now become the frequent object of her thoughts. In particular, the surmises of her faithful and sober-minded waiting-maid, on the score of Tremaine's principles in religion, though not of much authority, yet, added to her own observation of his tenets in general, left her far from at rest.

Winter, indeed, had made a considerable mistake, of which she had stood convicted in the affair of the Somerville Wood ladies; and she was punished for it by a whole week's silence at her mistress's undressing. She had, therefore, for some time returned to the praises of Tremaine. Nevertheless, as she was a godly woman in her way, and, moreover, considered Monsieur Dupuis as very first-rate authority, she could not help, if only for

the good of his soul, and as an advance towards reform, relating to her mistress her suspicions, that Mr. Tremaine, in regard both to practice and doctrine, was not quite right.

After praising him, therefore, one day to the skies, for never inspecting Mrs. Watson's accounts, but trusting all to her honesty, "There is but one thing," she added, "against him; and pity it is in so nice a gentleman, so good to all pervided they don't teize him: do you know, Ma'am, he lets Mrs. Watson give away as much as she pleases:—she must have a nice place on it. But there is one thing which she and I both disapprove; and I said to her one day, I was sure you would do so too if you knew it."

"What can you possibly mean?" said Georgina, with displeasure. "I hope you don't make me the subject....."

"Oh dear! no, Ma'am, I am sure I never took the liberty of your name but that once, and then I am sure it slipped out I don't know how; I was so certain you would not like what Mrs. Watson said....."

"I must beg, Winter," replied Georgina, with more gravity than she had ever yet shown, "that you will not make either me or Mr. Tremaine the subject of your conversation with anybody, and least of all with Watson."

"La! Ma'am," answered the waiting-woman, "I wonder why; for I pertest, both Watson and me think it the most naturalest thing in the world, you are both of you so good, only for that one thing."

"Well," said Georgina, "as you have talked about it —though I must beg you to mind what I have said, and never....."

"Oh dear no, Ma'am, never, you may rely upon it," interrupted Winter.

"Well, then," continued Georgina, good-humouredly, "what is your one thing?"

"He never goes to church, Ma'am," answered Winter.

"I am sorry for it," said Miss Evelyn, thoughtfully.

"That's what I said you would be," answered the waiting-maid, "and indeed, Ma'am, I am afraid from what Mr. Doopooy says, he has no notion of religion at all."

"Monsieur Dupuis," observed her mistress, "is no doubt a very excellent judge."

"Oh, as for that, Ma'am," rejoined Winter, who feared she might have gone too far, "I am sure I think he's no judge at all; for Mrs. Watson, who you know is a little bit of a methodist, showed me the most beautiful Bible I ever saw, which her master made her a present of the other day, and cost eight guineas."

"That does not look as if he did not care for it," thought Miss Evelyn, musing.

The waiting-maid went on: "I am sure that I don't believe a word that a Frenchman says. Only to be sure he never does go to church. Now if you and my master were to just talk to him a little ——"

"Leave me, Winter," said Miss Evelyn, "I can do all the rest of my undressing myself."

The conversation, in fact, was going too far, and, without knowing how to get out of it, the sense of propriety of this excellent young creature made her feel, without any reflection, the necessity for its termination. When alone, however, she began to think seriously of her waiting-maid's last hint.

"There cannot be a want of real religion," said she to herself, "in a mind of such principle; it must be merely some eccentricity, some mistake; and he is improved in everything of late." She then resolved to take the first opportunity of the two friends being together to turn the conversation on the subject.

It was not long wanting; and, strange to say, it grew out of a discussion on the Opera.

CHAPTER LXI.

A DISSERTATION ON THE OPERA.

'Tis good; though music oft hath such a charm
To make bad good, and good provoke to harm.

I have seen the day
That I have worn a visor, and could tell
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,
Such as would please.

SHAKSPEARE.

"For once or twice, or, perhaps, half a dozen times in a season," said Evelyn, "I should not much mind, perhaps I should like it; but to have a box for the whole winter, and never miss a night, I own it is too much for the virtue of any man or any woman."

"And yet you own you once were a votary," remarked Tremaine.

"I confess it," said Evelyn, "a votary to all that could sooth, dazzle, or exhilarate, in sound or sight; to all the attractions of soul-subduing elegance; in short, to all that art or luxury could devise, by which, after laying reason asleep, it could enchant, overpower, and, I fear, corrupt the mind."

"Corrupt the mind!" exclaimed Tremaine. "Is it possible the Opera can so offend?"

"Not if moderately taken. It is then only a very splendid fête, exciting much emotion, 'tis true, but not so much as may not be soon allayed. But if repeated so as to become a nightly want, all other (particularly the more rational) gratifications fall down before, and are absorbed by it; and whatever becomes of the virtue of your philosophers of fashion, I should tremble for mine."

"I am to understand then," said Tremaine, laughing, "that men of fashion have more power to resist temptation than you country clergymen."

"Rather that you are like the devils," answered Evelyn, "and are condemned to live in flames, which do not torture the less, because they are not annihilated."

"Who would have thought that you were so easily undermined?" asked Tremaine.

"I am so," replied Evelyn: "and the misery is that the Opera devotee, whether male or female, goes on, night after night, undermining and relaxing all the springs of virtuous or religious energy, without being conscious of the danger; and a character may be unsettled, or a soul lost, before anything is known but the effect."

"Perhaps that is the reason," rejoined Tremaine, "why the bishops never favour us with their presence."

"And a very good one, if it is," answered Evelyn. "You will observe, however, I speak only of your thorough-paced Opera goer."

"What an epithet for a lover of the most elegant, the most fascinating of all amusements!" said Tremaine.

"It is that fascination, carried as it is to *excess*, with which I quarrel," replied his friend. "No, Sir, no: the Opera, to the senses, when daily taken, is like opium to the body—we are drunk without knowing it: nothing else will please, and yet it destroys. The stage is so set off with magnificence, that nothing simple afterwards can interest. Music seems to revel, as if Timotheus, or Apollo himself, directed. It 'takes the prison'd soul, and laps it in Elysium.' How can I, when nightly full of it, set about my devotions, or mere ordinary business, with common content?"

"I wonder you don't mention the dancing," said Tremaine.

"The worst of all," answered the moralist, "for here the utmost effort of art and ingenuity, under the most graceful, and therefore unsuspicious appearance, seems to be lavished on the poor tempted senses. Voluptuousness

applies to them in every form, every motion, every sound; and it depends merely upon the scope of the fable, or design of the ballet, what he may be for the rest of the night, and perhaps the next day."

"Are our principles then so weak?" asked Tremaine.

"Our principles, if we have any," said Evelyn, "seem to be left with our money at the door: for the very air of the enchanted palace is infectious."

"The company at least are much obliged to you," retorted Tremaine.

"The company is as bad as any part of it," answered Evelyn.

"This is most extraordinary!"

"Not in the least. Pleasure, in its most gilded shape, pleasure without reflection, is the object of all. Dress, manners, conversation, ideas, are all shaped and directed according to its dictates. The natural character of every one seems to partake of what is going forward on the stage. Elegant voluptuousness takes possession; voluptuousness not thought dangerous, because so elegant. Hence, affectation, flirtation, and assignation; hence, the acting, both off and on the stage; hence, the ruin of many a young mind, put out of humour with its every-day duties. In short, in the boxes, as well as on the boards, Circe, Comus, and Calypso seem to keep their court, and the enchanter actually for a time makes good the promise of his cup (more precious than nepenthe), that it will

> Bathe the drooping senses in delight,
> Beyond the bliss of dreams!

"This is very eloquent," said Tremaine, turning to Georgina, who listened the whole time with marked attention: "but I perceive you only wish to set this fair lady upon her guard, or perhaps, like a good rhetorician, merely try an experiment as to your powers for or against a question."

"I assure you," said Evelyn, gravely, "I only speak

my thoughts, which arose long ago out of severe examinations which I was forced to hold with myself on the subject."

"You found yourself undermined," observed Tremaine.

"Not so much undermined, as unfitted, by taking too much of it, for the more sober and important pursuits of life. You will observe I still confine myself to the case of its becoming an habitual *want*, as it did with me, and as it does with most. In that case, it is like gaming, which swallows up both passion and principle; and the gardens of Armida were not more enervating to the heroism of Rinaldo, than the Opera-house to the virtue and devotion of a christian."*

"Did ever any man alive, before this," exclaimed Tremaine, "attempt to mix virtue and christian devotion with the Opera?"

Georgina laughed, and he continued: "Belinda smiled, and all the world was gay; hence I suppose a lady never wants an excuse for a smile; otherwise I would ask my fair friend what prompted her mirth?"

"To see how we may sometimes be misapprehended," answered she; for it was because virtue and devotion could *never* mix with an Opera, that my father mentioned them."

"The lady understands me, as she always does," pursued Evelyn, half embracing her as he said it.

Tremaine envied that half embrace.

"Seriously, can you wonder," added Evelyn, "that not merely a clergyman, but any man not absolutely debauched by the world, or indifferent to what is to come, should lament the sort of corruption, that, 'mining all within,' under the name of pleasure, 'infects unseen!'"

* The Doctor seems to have lived so long in the country as really to have grown a little rusty; for his feelings and his fears are those of a raw young man, educated by his grandmother, and seeing an opera during his first winter in London.—Ed.

"I deny both the corruption and the infection," answered Tremaine, "and never found the elegance you complain of do other than refine my taste, or soften my heart to all about me."

"To the singers and dancers I have no doubt it did," replied Evelyn, "as it did mine when a young man; and what young man is not liable to be softened by an Opera girl? But will you tell me if it ever excited one virtuous emotion, one that was not even in some degree of a different complexion? If it were only from the circumstance of the best Opera being always on the Saturday, the eve of the sabbath, I should quarrel with it."

"That is a sophistry I did not expect from so large a mind," said Tremaine, "for with so much true religion as such a teacher of it must have, what difference, in point of effect, can mere conventional forms produce?"

"Do you call, then, the sabbath a form?" said Evelyn, seriously.

"To a man sincerely and deeply imbued with the reality, as you are, I do," answered Tremaine.

"I did not know that had been your creed," said Evelyn, gravely; and Georgina perceiving her wished-for opportunity was already come, listened with all the eagerness of fixed attention.

"My good friend," observed Tremaine, "creeds are at all times, in my opinion, but bad things, since they only fetter the liberal mind, and produce misunderstandings by introducing points of controversy, which in time become points of honour, and are unceasing causes of strife. *I* say my prayers in the fields; *you* in a church; yet we both pray to the same deity. I am most fervent in one week on a Saturday, in another on a Friday, you always on a Sunday: which is likely to be most spontaneous, and therefore most serious in devotion, *you*, whose call is periodical, and the effect of mere institution —or *I*, who listen alone to the immediate impulse of the heart?"

"There is no irreligion in this," thought Georgina.

"Go on," cried Evelyn, "I like this very well."

"I have done," said Tremaine. "I only meant to show that, true devotion not being confined to time or place, it is fallacious to reason against the indulgence of pleasure at one moment, because the next is set apart by a rule (and nothing else), to what is called a religious duty."

"That is," replied Evelyn, "you think there ought to be no sabbath; which, if we should be so obliging as to annihilate, there would be no harm in indulging on its eve in an amusement, which, I say, is wholly incompatible with its duties."

"Granting for a moment your consequence, *ex absurdo*, you have not proved this incompatibility," said Tremaine.

"I speak only from experience, the best of guides," answered Evelyn, "for at five-and-twenty I once passed every night of a whole winter at the Opera, and of course never missed on a Saturday; but the effect upon my feelings, and my sacred duties the next day, I have hardly yet ceased to lament as well as to remember."

"You were even then, I believe, in orders?" observed Tremaine.

"So much the stronger for the argument," replied Evelyn; "for if I, with all the seriousness of my functions before me, could not sometimes, even in the pulpit, divest myself of the dazzling, the dissipated ideas which had filled me but a few hours before, how will those people act, particularly if young, with their passions and imaginations all awake, who have no peculiar sacredness thrown around them from profession, but conceive they are left pretty much to themselves on the point?"

"You either strain this matter too far," answered Tremaine, "or other people have not your vivid imagination. At any rate you recovered yourself."

"I did, but not at the Opera."

"Where then?"

"In seclusion, in lonely self-examination; for I obeyed the precept, 'commune with thine own heart in thy chamber.' I went afterwards to the Opera, but not fre-

quently; *never* on a Saturday night; and was all the better for my change of habits."

The gravity of Evelyn's recollections here made him stop, and the conversation paused; nor did Tremaine think proper to continue the discussion of that part of the subject.

END OF VOL. I

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TREMAINE.

"She loved, and kissed her hand, with the grace that always enchanted him."

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TREMAINE;

OR THE

MAN OF REFINEMENT.

BY

ROBERT PLUMER WARD, ESQ.

VOL. II.

"It was not without mingled pleasure, and a sensation of relief, that after a few minutes more of musing, not at all satisfactory, he beheld the return of Evelyn from his visit."

Ed. V. p. 235

TREMAINE,

OR,

THE MAN OF REFINEMENT.

CHAPTER I.

A DISSERTATION ON PRAYER AND GOING TO CHURCH.

> How he solicits Heaven himself best knows,
> For here we have no temple but the woods.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

Upon forms and ceremonies, no man was so strong as Tremaine; and the prejudice he felt against what *he* called prejudice was so great, that at the hazard of hurting, and even displeasing, not only his friend, but his friend's daughter, he reverted to what had fallen from Evelyn in respect to the sabbatical institution.

"Granting you a sabbath," said he, "I own you have defended this matter well; and I believe we must bring in a bill to transpose the Opera from Saturday to Friday."

"From your principle just elicited," answered Evelyn, "it would be rather more desirable, I think, to have a bill for the annihilation of Sunday itself; and I recollect your favourite philosopher, Voltaire, in his Country Priest's Catechism, while he condescends to allow the people to say a few prayers on this day, computes that one hundred and fifty millions of livres a year would be saved to the state, by only depriving it of its character of a day of rest*."

"You do him injustice," said Tremaine: "he only would make the labourers work as usual, when church is

* Diction. Philosoph.

over, instead of going to the ale-house, to make themselves beasts."

"He has no right to assume they will do so," answered Evelyn: "in fact, only a small part actually do so, and these few would be still less in number if their masters went to church."

"You would then make us go to church, merely that our servants may not get drunk?" observed Tremaine.

"How much do you assume in that *merely?*" replied Evelyn. "No! I would have you go, that you may not get drunk yourselves; drunk with irreligion, drunk with philosophy, which always begins by a lazy habit of neglecting the forms of our worship."

"Forms again!" cried Tremaine.

"My dear friend," said Evelyn, with emphasis as well as kindness, "this is a most important, yet surely a very clear subject. I only hope, and I do it earnestly, that our difference is really about forms, and that you have not quitted the substance."

The good Doctor here grasped his hand with friendly fervour, and surveyed him with a penetrating eye.

"I cannot possibly have an objection to people saying their prayers," answered Tremaine.

"That's something," said his friend; "but why not then pray with them?—why not join in kindling one another's devotion?"

"You have hit a great part of my objection," replied the speculatist. "It is with that *kindling* I quarrel; for devotion, to be pure, ought to be spontaneous: if it depends upon others to be kindled, it is factitious. Hence I never could bear any stated hour of prayer, any ceremonial, anything that I call mechanical, in a matter which must always be beyond the reach of mechanism. Nor can I be persuaded that he who, upon surveying the glory of the heavens, or feeling his heart swell with any great happiness, falls down in the fields or in his chamber, to pour out his mind in thanksgiving and adoration, is not more really devout than he who prays because he is just awake, or just going to sleep, or because the clock strikes ten. The real fervour of religion must surely be lighted

up by feelings far removed from all cold dependencies upon time, or even place. Some places, indeed, may be found that inspire us, sooner than others, with ideas of the more immediate presence of the Deity:—

> Presentiorem conspicimus Deum
> Per invias rupes, fera per juga,
> Clivosque præruptos sonantes
> Inter aquas, nemorumque noctem,
> Quam si repostus trabe sub citrea,
> Fulgeret auro, et Phidiaco manu*."

"Beautiful!" exclaimed Evelyn, letting his love of poetry for a moment suspend his argument; "thou almost persuadest me to turn savage, and fly the tame scene 'where bell hath knolled to church.'"

"I fear, however," continued Tremaine, "this feeling would not avail the generality, or give place any great advantage over time in this respect; for not only must we feel a portion of the Divine afflatus with which he who wrote these charming lines was inspired when he conceived them, but even with a warm imagination, the tame scene, as you justly call it (I mean our places of worship), seldom or never can influence. A church, for example, possesses in this matter no advantage whatever over a private room."

"Where is your enthusiasm for times past, your love of ancient lore?" said Evelyn. "You have surely forgotten the most venerable, the most soul-inspiring of all things."

"I do not comprehend," cried Tremaine.

"My father means a Gothic cathedral," observed Georgina.

"I do," said Evelyn; "and defy any man who has fervour of any kind in his soul, to tread the pavement of

* The classical reader (if I have one) will recollect the most beautiful of all modern odes, by Gray, to the Religio Loci of the Grande Chartreuse, whence this fragment is taken. Tremaine thus freely translated it afterwards, for Georgina.

"We seem to behold the Deity more immediately present amid pathless rocks and savage fells, amid broken crags, in sounding waterfalls, and the darkness of the forest, than in a temple resplendent with cedar and gold, the work of Phidias."

an ancient abbey, amid arches, and aisles, and tombs, and not feel awed. Remember how even a man of wit and pleasure, who sparkled brightest among the sparklers of his time, was able to describe this." And then he burst out with his usual warmth:—

> "How reverend is the face of this tall pile,
> Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
> To bear aloft its arch'd and ponderous roof,
> By its own weight made stedfast and immoveable,
> Looking tranquillity*."

"I allow all this," said Tremaine, "and have often felt both the sentiment and the beauty of these lines; nay, such is the power of sympathy, that I have generally, on entering such a venerable pile, caught a portion of the flame of those (particularly in Catholic countries) whom I have seen sincerely at their devotions. But alas! ...." and he stopped.

"Oh! what can be coming?" thought Georgina.

"Proceed," said Evelyn.

"I have checked myself," continued Tremaine, "with the thought, that hands like my own, and mortals like myself, had framed and fashioned these witcheries, and therefore that all was false."

"False!" cried Evelyn; "what then is true?"

Georgina sighed, but the sigh was lost in what followed.

"I will tell you," said Tremaine;—"though I may reject, or rather not necessarily fix upon a church, as the fittest place for devotion, I reject not devotion itself."

"Good!" observed Evelyn.

"In the wild scenes of nature," continued Tremaine, "such as the Chartreuse, and even in a retired garden, or the depth of a forest, where I have sometimes wandered in lonely musing, I have (in my younger days) vented my soul in prayer and thanksgiving."

Georgina's eyes absolutely glistened when she heard this, and Evelyn, taking his hand, exclaimed, with pious affection, "You are not far from the kingdom of God; why then do you refuse coming to his house?"

* Congreve.

"Why, indeed!" said Georgina; "I am fully persuaded this is only one of Mr. Tremaine's odd theories; for if he feels so substantially right——" She paused, and a sort of sigh escaped from Tremaine; for he recollected that many years indeed had elapsed since the happy times he was describing, when his youthful bosom ran over with religion as a sentiment, without being clogged with any of those miserable embarrassments which the pride of reason had since interposed.

"I fear," said he, "you give me more credit than I deserve; if it be a credit to be grateful. But if you ask me why I think of religious forms and ceremonies as I do, it is simply because the fulness of devotion, where sincere, must be always such as to burst beyond all restraint, and reduce forms to mere acting and mummery. I see a set of good folks in their best clothes, all sauntering on a given day to a given place, with an assumed air of seriousness, though the instant before they may have been occupied in merriment or business. Is there any reason for this universal consentaneous movement? Yes! a summons from a particular bell, placed in a steeple! Well; the congregation arrive at the door; on one side the threshold all is still ordinary conversation: on the other the holy fit comes on in a moment. Is it, can it be true, that this sudden change is real? and if not, what is it?

"My good neighbour," replied Evelyn, "we are taking up this matter too partially, and your too eager feelings blind you. If those to whom you allude have left subjects of merriment and business immediately before they go to their prayers, so much the worse for them. But this was not the intention of the sabbath: and it would have been but good for their spiritual interest as well as comfort, if they had stolen a little time from their worldly concerns, in order the better to produce that frame of mind so necessary for the serious office."

"*Produce* that frame of mind!" exclaimed Tremaine.

"Aye, Sir! 'twas my word. For do we not know enough of the nature of emotion, or rather of association,

to feel that almost any thing can be excited by laying the proper train?"

"If devotion be so excited," replied Tremaine, "it becomes artificial, and therefore hypocritical?"

"I deny both the one and the other," said the Doctor. "Consider this matter," continued he. "You say yourself, that in the recess of a forest, lonely and musing, you have fallen down, and worshipped. Explain to me, when you entered your retreat, were you in this frame of mind?—did you leave your house under any peculiarly devout impression?"

"Perhaps not. I probably only set out on a common walk, but was filled by degrees with the contemplation of nature."

"Your devotion, then, possibly came on in consequence of an almost imperceptible pursuit of ideas, each following, and each enlarging on the other?"

"Very possibly."

"Tell me, then, do you think your piety was kindled by any immediate call from above—any supernatural visitation—or only the consequence of a serious frame of mind, generated in a natural manner?"

"Certainly the latter," said Tremaine.

"Answer again, before we finish," pursued Evelyn. "Were you not soothed and happier for your devotion? and could a wish at any time command the same moments, would you not indulge that wish?"

"I would give the world sometimes to renew them?"

"The devotion, then, that springs from a wish to be devout, is not mechanical?'

"I should suppose not."

"'Tis quite enough," said the Socratic Doctor; "for the poor people you have sneered at might be, if they pleased, precisely in your situation in the forest."

"That I defy you to make out," observed Tremaine.

"And yet," rejoined Evelyn, "nothing is more simple; for I hold piety to be a natural attribute of man, and seated in his heart; although together, with everything else belonging to that poor heart, it may be

smothered, or bruised, or worn out, or covered with callosities, according to the character, fortune, or way of life of the wayward possessor."

"Your inference," said Tremaine.

"Why, that piety being in the heart, like a seed in the ground, it may always swell, and sprout, and fructify, according to the willingness and pains bestowed on its cultivation."

"Still I don't see the conclusion," pursued Tremaine.

"Merely that if common attention be paid to it, not in fits and starts, but at regular and stated times,—as you would weed and water your seed, without trusting it to chance,—it will interweave itself into your habit, will always be ready, and will even court your call."

"And then?"

"Why, then, it will always accompany you to church, if you only please to let it do so," said the Doctor.

Tremaine, though shaken, looked still unconvinced.

"You will oblige me," said he, "by explaining the potent incantation by which you would make this call, and at any rate, prove to me that it is not artificial."

"The process, however, is very inartificial, and in every one's power," returned Evelyn. "It is only a little to help, I had almost said not to disturb, the natural course of things."

"As how?" asked Tremaine.

"Not to go to the Opera on a Saturday night," answered the Doctor.

"It is amazing," continued he, perceiving that Tremaine paused upon his words, "to hear men (sincere and well-meaning men too,) complain of their want of zeal, and of their indifference and worldly mindedness: and yet to observe the pains they take to shut up every avenue by which devotion, if only left to itself, would pass into the heart. We prepare for divine service, as you say, by indulging in merriment, or business, or politics, to the very moment when the soul is to be poured forth in prayer. Those who have been at a great public entertainment the preceding night, canvass the actors, male and famale, to the very church door; and I recol-

lect a gay lady, who yet was constant with her family at morning church, open her pew to an acquaintance, asking whether he would not come into her *box !* The merchant in the country goes to the post-office on the sabbath morning, discusses the price of stocks, and with his letters full in his head, perhaps in his very hand, walks to his church, yet wonders he is not devout. The politician in town does the same by all the Sunday papers. Yet if we do the contrary of all this, by only passing a little preparatory time in meditation, in looking over the sacred book, or the collect of the day, or in private prayer, though nothing may be more sincere than the consequent devotion it kindles, it is called artificial. Now where is the difference, in this respect, between a zeal when in the church, which is the natural and sincere offspring of this concatenation, and yours in the forest, which was the production of mere preparatory ideas ? "

" The difference," said Tremaine, " is, that the one comes spontaneously, the other is factitious."

" I care not how it comes," answered Evelyn, " provided it is real when it does come: and you yourself allow that if it could come with a wish, it would not be mechanical. Now, when I open my Bible, or any devout book, or merely a serious moral essay—all which I have the will to do, if I please—I *wish* for the consequences, and your associations in the wood immediately commence. The proper frame of mind, if it did not exist before, is thus generated by degrees ; it is no more artificial than any other frame of mind that flows from natural meditation ; and hence it is my power to wish, and be gratified in my wish. Upon this very subject, you will recollect what the wisest of all mortals, at least of all modern mortals, (for so I hold Lord Bacon to be.) has observed in his beautiful prayer: ' I have sought thee in courts, fields, and gardens, but I have found thee in thy temples.' This has been well supposed to mean devotional exercise, with a view to cultivate and improve our piety, as we would cultivate and improve anything else."

" How can piety, which you suppose *innate*," said

Tremaine, " require this cultivation? How, therefore, be compared to anything else?"

" Why not as well as taste, or any other quality seated in the soul, that is not a mere art or science? Hence, therefore, my unceasing wonder, that, in an age in which there is at least much *talk* about religion, in which there is much real attention to the education of the poor, and in which good books multiply in every library, there should be a total neglect of the good old custom of our ancestors, who at night and morning joined in family prayer."

" I suppose," said Tremaine, " it is because you cannot prove the peculiar sacredness of any one particular hour, in which the holy temper is to be generated; why the morning or the evening should be expected to call for prayers which the noon is to be without. A really grateful and liberal heart cannot be so fettered, and the Almighty might almost seem mocked, with such mere and palpable form."

" And yet nature, in prompting our duty at morn and eve, speaks to us more plainly than you seem to be aware of," said Evelyn.

" I know what you would say," replied Tremaine, " and you will tell me of Providence. This, on the approach of night, I can almost conceive, or at least can understand why it is believed. The evening comes on, we stand in need of sleep, which closing up our senses, all vigilance is suppressed, and we think we require peculiar protection. Who then shall keep watch for us, is a question which comes sensibly home to our thoughts at our lying down. Then comes cowardice, heightened by fancy, and we are glad to rely on a Being who will take the post of our senses, and do that for us which we cannot do for ourselves. This is at least a comfortable supposition, and I am not surprised at nightly prayer; but what the same prayer has to do with our uprising, I own it baffles me to make out"

" As if he who rules the night does not also rule the day," said Evelyn: " or, if we could take care

of ourselves either by night or by day without him who watches everywhere, is everywhere, sees all things, and governs all things. But, exclusive of this, is there nothing, after the interesting description you have given of our wants and our fears, for which we ought to thank him who has been our protector against both? Is there nothing new in which we are about to embark, and which claims equal protection, though, perhaps, of another kind? Your picture of a devout and grateful heart I like full well. But if we were all left, as we listed, to fall down in the fields, or in our chambers, I am afraid few knees would bend. We should first postpone, then neglect, then be indifferent, and, at last, wicked; for, having offended God by defrauding him of his worship, our consciences would perpetually prick us. This would cause uneasiness; and we hate uneasiness: and rather than this, we should make the attempt to take refuge in infidelity, and soon come to have no religion at all."

"My difference with you," answered Tremaine, "is, that you leave us with no will in this matter, no independence, but all must pray at once, and finish at once, like the troops of a certain German Landgrave, at the word of command; and, like them, if one be a little more devout than another, and so pray a minute or two longer, he is immediately caned for it."

The Doctor smiled.

"I will allow, if you please," pursued Tremaine, "that a church is not a bad thing with a view to enforce the devotion of the mob; but you will not condescend to rest an abstract subject upon a mere particular argument."

"I of course speak only of the well-educated, the contemplative, the philosophic. A bishop, according to you, is even in his piety a mere machine!"

"According to what you *think* I call a machine, he is so."

"But the force of sympathy," answered Evelyn, "which, in a matter of feeling as well as reason, (and such I all along hold religion to be,) will always overpower everything that reason, without feeling, may

coldly attempt. Have we never heard of the beautiful line,

> And those that came to laugh, remain'd to pray ?

Get people, then, once to church, and give me but a few in a really devout mood, and I will answer for most of the rest."

"Oh! no doubt," replied Tremaine, "and be sure in your sympathies you forget not the influence of the bells, the music of England! I should be glad to follow your ingenuity in tracing the exact progress of kindling piety, as the tolling changes from almost merriment to gravity, and from gravity to devotion. There is first a deep chime, then a deep tolling, lastly, a little minute-bell, while the vicar is putting on his surplice: but this mummery rather moves the spleen than raises devotion."

"With all due respect for your powers of sarcasm," rejoined Evelyn, "I see nothing to quarrel with in our bells. If only as signals for a community to assemble for the performance of a common duty, they are of use. Meeting you, however, on your own terms, I would say the associations which their sounds carry along with them, do, in effect, produce much of that influence which you endeavour to ridicule; and I defy any plain good man, who has religion in his heart, or even only in his imagination, to hear this invitation, without feeling a sort of magical sympathy, which will instantly render him serious, if not pious."

"I should be dissatisfied with such a sympathy, because it cannot, being artificial, lead to genuine results," said Tremaine.

"And yet you have often seen it do so, and felt it yourself," replied Evelyn.

"Never!" replied his friend. "Yes! perhaps when I was a boy, without experience, and, from being new to everything, capable of appreciating nothing."

"Rather, I should say," replied Evelyn, "capable of appreciating everything, from not having been sophisticated by anything. But I meant not this,"

continued he, "when I said you had often felt it: for deeply have you felt it, in other sounds as well as those of a bell."

"In what?" asked Tremaine, with curiosity.

"A bugle!" answered Evelyn.

"A bugle!"

"Yes! for give me leave to ask, if, in the campaigns you made in search of that experience which makes you so dissatisfied with everything you *do* experience, you did not feel a glow, an eagerness of animation, whenever the bugle sounded, particularly if an enemy was near?"

"I did," said Tremaine.

"And why? Because of its concomitant ideas. You thought of the field in motion," continued Evelyn, "of battle joined, or about to join; of the 'plumed troop,' and everything that you soldiers say can make ambition virtue! In short, your imagination conjured up

> The royal banner, and all quality,
> Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war!"

"You have hit the matter exactly," said Tremaine.

"Probably, too," continued Evelyn, "the whole army partook of this generous ardour?"

"Nothing more likely."

"Then, pray, what is this association but the magical sympathy I talked of? And if all this arose simply upon hearing one sort of sound, why may not I, or any other serious man (soldiers, too, in our way,) feel equally kindled at another?"

Tremaine was again silent; but it was no longer the silence of embarrassment, or of a man endeavouring to rally in an argument for victory. He felt convinced, and only hesitated as to the moment and the manner of showing it. In the pause that ensued, he took several turns across the room, and at every turn eyed both his friends with softness and consciousness at the same time. Both were observing him; and in Georgina in particular he was struck with a look of interest he had not hitherto seen. It seemed as if her heart was inquiring of his,

whether it were possible he could hold out against not merely the piety, but the force of reasoning of her father.

The thought determined, not indeed his reason, (*that* had been fairly convinced,) but his conduct; and taking a hand of each of his companions, "My dear friends," said he, "it is in vain to push this any further. I own I have long argued for argument's sake: I am conquered, and am happy to be so."

He said this with the *air noble* that belonged to him, and that air, together with what it sprung from, went deep into the heart of Georgina.

"He has religion in his soul," said she, as she left the room, and retired to her own. There she walked in silent musing for some time, revolving all she had heard, and the struggle, and the yielding she had witnessed. Tired at length, but not of her subject, she sat down at her window. The day threw a quietness over the landscape she beheld from it; and the train of her ideas corresponded with that quietness. Love and admiration of her father, and joy at the candour, and recovery as she thought it of the man she admired, gave a softness to her soul, which she took no pains to interrupt. She continued long and pensive in her seat; and if ever happiness visited a mortal bosom, this innocent and pure creature felt it then.

On the other hand, Evelyn, however pleased with the candour with which Tremaine seemed to return from error to the right path, was concerned to find his eccentricities so much wider than he had ever supposed them. What he had acknowledged made him lament to suspect that more remained behind; and the recent discovery which he thought he had made of his daughter's partiality, produced a resolution that he would sift the whole matter to the bottom, the very first opportunity.

CHAPTER II.

A COUNTRY CHURCH.

And have with holy bell been knoll'd to church.
SHAKSPEARE.

It was not long before this good friend, and good father, was furnished with an occasion to clear up all his doubts; and we are sorry to say, that his certainties made him even more unhappy than his suspicions.

From what small circumstances the greatest events have arisen, so as to colour and even change the fate of nations, has been the theme of many a poet, historian, and philosopher. That such is the course of things must be still more true in the little history of private life. A mistake of Dr. Juniper's house-keeper, in not properly apportioning the ingredients of his medicated ginger-bread-nuts, (the only form under which the Doctor could suffer medicine to be administered to him), and which mistake happened most critically on a Saturday, occasioned an indisposition which lasted all the next day, and prevented him from performing the church service at Woodington; of which, be it remembered, he was the worthy Rector. It was the more unlucky, because the Doctor's curate, who kept a little school in the village, in which he wasted his spirits for eight precious hours a day, having dismissed all his scholars to one of their periodical vacations, had asked and obtained leave of his chief to dismiss himself to that happy idleness, so sweet to those who have earned it, so burthensome to those who get it for nothing.

In a word the Doctor was ill; his curate was absent; there was nobody to officiate; the clerk was in dismay; the whole village alarmed; and the sexton had actually begun tolling the bell, without being certain that a message which Juniper had sent over to his brother

Rector at Evelyn, for the loan of his curate, would be attended with success.

Conceive the delight of all the functionaries of Woodington parish, to say nothing of the squire of Woodington himself, when Dr. Evelyn's post-chaise, with his fat long-tailed geldings and their round-sided driver, were seen to enter the Hall gates, from which it was but a walk across the garden to the church. Nearly all the congregation were already assembled.

Though Tremaine had little other communication with Juniper than that of mere civility, having in fact scarcely ever entered his parish church since his arrival, yet so great an event as the Rector's illness on a Sunday morning, and during the absence of his curate, could not fail of being made known to him, as it was by the pious Watson, together with the means taken to obviate the difficulty. He was therefore more pleased than surprised to receive his visiters from Evelyn Hall; for both were as usual together. Evelyn had in fact, as soon as he received Juniper's message, resolved to attend himself, and leave his own parish for that one morning to his curate; in which, it must be owned, he was not without design; for he thought it might be a mean to tempt Tremaine to church; and once there, he trusted to his always high notion of the efficacy of public worship to produce some good, however small, to the balancing mind of his friend.

With this hope Evelyn furnished himself with what he thought would be an appropriate sermon for the pulpit at Woodington; not conceiving that Woodington's master could refuse his attendance. Nor in this last was he deceived; for to his own satisfaction, and Georgina's great pleasure, Tremaine offered instantly to escort them into the church; where the belfry seemed to be giving way under the redoubled strokes of the honest sexton above mentioned,—who, at the entrance of so great a divine as Evelyn was everywhere considered, knolled in a sort of triumph, proportioned to the fears he had entertained, lest there should be no divine at all. The whole church-yard too, which by this time was full, saluted the

squire and his well-known guests; and great was the elation of Mrs. Watson, and many her condescending nods and bows, exchanged with the better sort of her parish neighbours, smirking in their clean shirts, sabbath-day suits, and new-shaven beards, and thronging about her to notice the phenomenon of the squire at church.

"Doctor be so ill, we thought there'd bin no service," said one. "I spy'd un first. I know heavy Solomon and his long tails half a mile off," said another. "I dare say a'll make a foin discourse," cried a third. "Meeting be quoit desarted," observed a fourth. "Yes, and old Mr. Barnabus is quoit haggled with it," exclaimed a fifth.

By this time the surplice bell was done, and Evelyn in the desk, turning over his leaves, and so great an attention had this little novelty, combined with their respect for him, excited among these simple people, that instead of the usual scraping of hob-nails a pin had been heard if it had fallen that morning in Woodington church.

Tremaine took his seat by Georgina in the Rector's pew; abandoning his own in the gallery above, hung all over with crimson cloth. Behind were seats of green baize, filled by his numerous domestics—all save Monsieur Dupuis, who, under pretence of being a Catholic, denied himself utterly to all Mrs. Watson's intreaties, nay even her tears, to be present upon this occasion; which, some how or another, had assumed an air of peculiar solemnity.

Reader, I am perfectly aware to how much I have exposed myself, by entering into all these minutiæ, in a matter of such seemingly little moment, as a strange clergyman preaching in a country church. I shall perhaps be accused of twaddling, and reminded of the by-gone days of Sir Roger de Coverley. But the truth is, that this particular Sunday, and this very church attendance, were most critical in determining much of the fate of two very excellent persons, in a manner perhaps such as the reader does not expect; and I feel obliged to describe everything that led to it. But even if it had not

been so, I am not ashamed of my subject; which, whatever Lady Gertrude or Mr. Beaumont may think to the contrary, must ever be an interesting one to human nature, while the heart of that nature beats.

"If ever the poor man hold up his head" (says language better than mine,) "it is at church: if ever the rich man view him with respect, it is there; and both will be the better, and the public profited, the oftener they meet in a situation in which the consciousness of dignity in the one is tempered and mitigated, and the spirit of the other erected and confirmed.*"

Despise not therefore the little anxieties which the chance of losing their service and their sermon had occasioned in the hearts of these plain, or, if you will, these uncouth people. Analyse those anxieties, and dissect those hearts, and your own will possibly not show above them, even though you may be Right Honourable, and breathless perhaps from the favourable or unfavourable appearance of the House, on some night critical to the place, power and influence of those whom nothing but place, power and influence can excite.

Supposing that some of my readers have been to church, and supposing them to have one spark of religious feeling in their composition; or, if that is too much, supposing what all would be affronted not to have supposed concerning them, that they possess what is called taste, imagination, a glow of thought and warmth of soul—why then they will at some time or another of their lives have been penetrated with the pathetic beauty of our Liturgy. It survives even the dull obtuseness of the hard-hearted machines, which sometimes are permitted, for our sins, to obscure and oppress it by their leaden delivery. What must it have been in the mouth of one of kindred spirit with those who composed it?

Such a one was Evelyn. The impressiveness of his manner we have talked of in other things; but here he seemed inspired; though he was merely sincere in his feeling, and plain in his enunciation.

* Paley's Moral Philosophy, vol. ii. p. 56.

Tremaine never was so struck. With his imagination and warmth of feeling the reader indeed is acquainted, as well as with his endeavours to mar and stifle them, from the unhappy cast of his artificial life and studies;

Vain wisdom all and false philosophy.

From this laudable impulse, he strove to check the rising feelings of nature; which, not a little aided by the sight of Georgina by his side, in the purest acts of devotion, as her father read on, grew almost too strong for him.

We grieve to say, the philosopher conquered, and the man of nature, after a struggle, was forced to yield; and though he felt all the sympathies upon which Evelyn had so well enlarged in their last conversation upon the subject; though he bent his knee, and even whispered out a hope that he might be enlightened, if really he were in error; yet he rose without his hope being heard; his pride of reasoning returned, and he forced himself to think, that there was no proof of the reasonableness of his feelings beyond sympathy, and that that sympathy was weakness.

In this train of thought he was ill prepared for the sermon which followed; that sermon from which Evelyn, with honest confidence, had hoped such good effects.

The text was a solemn one.—"The foolish body hath said in his heart, there is no God." It went on, "Tush, they say, how should God perceive it; is there knowledge in the Most High?" "These are the ungodly, these prosper in the world, and these have riches in possession, and I said, then have I cleansed my heart in vain."

The discourse, such as might be expected from the preacher; the moral as well as the natural government of the world, by Him who created it; his competency; his willingness; the necessity for his interference; his actual interposition; in short, the whole proof of Providence, though by second causes; lastly the immortality of the soul, a future judgment, and the certainty of retribution; —all these formed the topics of the most impressive sermon to which Tremaine had ever listened. With whatever impression, not a word of it was lost.

In fact, it at least so far answered Evelyn's hope, that Tremaine's mind seemed filled with it; and after the congregation were dismissed, and his guests had accompanied him to the house, previous to their returning home, far from doing the honours with his usual alacrity of attention, he became abstracted and silent, and with even Georgina still by his side, seemed to wish to be alone.

Evelyn observed this as well as his daughter, and partly hoping, partly believing the cause, and wishing him to ponder the momentous subject which he saw agitating him, took his leave at once, and remounting his substantial vehicle, returned home.

CHAPTER III.

CONFESSION.

MR. TREMAINE FORFEITS ALL PRETENSIONS TO FASHION.

> Oh! thou Eternal Mover of the Heavens,
> Look with an eye of pity on this wretch!
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

At home and alone, and the world once more shut out, the mind of Tremaine gave a loose to the serious train of thought which had now been generated. The subject had always been of the very first importance to his feelings, and he had always fled from it as a matter he could not settle with himself, rather than as one he had already settled on the side which his fastidious doubts made him support.

The clear and decided opinions which Evelyn had promulgated from the pulpit, sat so naturally upon him as to give him the air and weight of an apostle. But from this very circumstance, such was the strange and tortuous cast of his understanding, that Tremaine set a guard upon himself, lest it should influence him improperly.

"Truth," he said, "might be disguised, but never demonstrated by air and manner. A kind of false honour, therefore, combined for a time with false notions, to produce the obstinate resistance he was inclined to make against his better feelings. He yielded, however, so far as to exclaim, "Oh, that this strong-minded man could be successful in convincing me! But adoration and thanksgiving are not prayer; and even a particular Providence, which is everywhere denied by experience, may exist in this life, without a life to come!"

Still his prejudices were so far beaten down, that he turned his eyes inwardly on himself, and was far, very far from easy with the scrutiny.

"I am myself an instance," said he, "of one of my friend's sagacious remarks, that left to ourselves as to duty, we shall first postpone, then neglect, and then renounce. Alas! that I could recal those happy moments of gratitude to heaven, when in the morning of life all things promised gladness, and I was glad! Yet then I was poor, and my fate uncertain. Now that I am lord of this wide and beautiful domain, how changed, how hardened is my heart! Such, oh world! are thy spoiled children!—such the rewards of unceasing dissipation.

> "For swinish gluttony
> Ne'er looks to Heav'n amidst his gorgeous feast,
> But with besotted, base ingratitude,
> Crams, and blasphemes his feeder."

He could not support his emotions, but rushing out of doors, and plunging into a dark and retired walk, taxed his heart with all the bitterness of remorse.

The walk led him insensibly to a spring, which his uncle, a contemplative man (the last possessor of Woodington), had nursed with great care. After winding under a very beautiful bank, it seemed to repose in a basin, which it was doubtful whether nature or art had prepared for it—so neat, yet so wild was its appearance. It here had all the clearness and all the stillness of an immense mirror; but on its margin art showed itself in a manner not to be mistaken:

for not only some benches surrounded a well-kept turf, but the busts of several of the dead, the honour of England's piety, as well as her philosophy, filled the eye with interest, and fixed its attention. They were of Bacon, Milton, Newton, Cudworth, and Locke; to which had been more recently added Clarke and Johnson. It was the joint work of the late Mr. Tremaine and of Evelyn, on whose grounds it bordered.

But the present master of Woodington knew very little of this possession of his; for he had visited it but once, and with that glazed apathy with which the state of his mind, when he first came down, made him visit everything. He recollected, indeed, that when he saw these consecrated busts he had resolved to add those of Bolingbroke, Shaftesbury, and Voltaire, to the number; but the resolution had been laid aside, together with the remembrance of the place itself.

In his present frame of mind, his entrance into this assembly (for such it appeared), struck him as if he had viewed the gardens of Academus.

He fell into deep musing as he looked at these busts, and recognised the character and works of those they represented.

"They were great men," said he, "and certainly, as to intellect, the pride of their species. Alas! why cannot I think as they?"

He walked the border of the spring, in a sort of agitated pace, now looking up to heaven, now on the features of the departed sages.

"They were also," he added, "sincere in their opinions, and at the very least as wise, and a great deal more learned, than those who opposed them:"—and he thought of Bolingbroke. "How then can I refuse to yield to such authority? Why is my soul so stiff? Oh! God, enlighten me, and touch my heart!"

At that moment he was a little surprised, but not ill-pleased, with the sight of his friend.

It has been observed that the spring and its ornaments had been in part the work of Evelyn, and that it bordered upon his grounds. This, and an entrance key, together

with the beautiful retirement of the place, made it in fact more an object of enjoyment to Evelyn, than, as it happened, to the owner himself. Accordingly, it was here Evelyn frequently came to soothe himself in meditation, when meditation was his object; at which times he could dispense with the presence even of Georgina.

A single glance sufficed to show Evelyn that the mind of his friend was by no means at ease. Indeed, we have but ill depicted him, if, with all his faults, the reader has not perceived long ago, that whatever was the opinion or the feeling uppermost, it was immediately to be read on his brow, or in his deportment. In fact, no child was less master of that useful and meritorious art, so necessary to all who set up to govern or lead mankind, but which had through his whole career failed this eccentric gentleman, namely, dissimulation. I think he could not, therefore, even if he would, have concealed from Evelyn, that his reason and his feeling were at that moment in contention together.

To the Doctor's question whether anything had happened to disturb him, he replied with frankness, and almost with eagerness—"Yes, a great deal." Rather misled by this eagerness, his friend proceeding to inquire what, he fairly told him—"Your sermon. I give you joy," he continued, "of your powers of argument and elucidation, of your rhetoric, your feeling, your piety, and eloquence. Would to God I could give you and myself as much joy of your powers of convincing!"

"Is that necessary to do you good?" asked Evelyn.

"It would make me a happier man," said Tremaine.

Evelyn perceived at once the fact, and the cause of the commotion his friend seemed to be in, and thought the time was come when he might lay open his principles, and examine his mind, as he wished.

He therefore probed him deeply, and the result was not happy. The authority of the ancient academies, and the perpetual undermining of the moderns; the pomp of Shaftesbury; the glitter of Bolingbroke; the speciousness of Hume; and the wit of Voltaire; all these had, by being continually pondered, acquired a sort of mechanical

ascendency over this determined enemy of all mechanism; and he had habitually accustomed himself to think only of them, without considering the sacred book, or the immense authority on the other side. He knew indeed that these existed; he had formerly felt their force; but having, as he thought, chosen his creed, he had for some time purposely shunned them; and the yearnings which every now and then he could not prevent, he represented as the effect of mere early prejudice.

His disposition of mind, however, was at present anything but proud. His heart was even softened. But it was a human heart; and inconceivable are the wanderings, and turnings, the sudden emotions, kindled we know not by what power, and impelled we know not by what accidents, which move and direct, and melt or congeal, that wayward heart.

Evelyn could meet with no satisfaction. He found, he said, the mind of his friend in a heap of ruins. Atheism was the only evil opinion from which he was exempt. Deism, scarcely understood even by himself, and obscured by constant doubt; a poor opinion of human nature, scarcely distinguishing it from brute; a labyrinth of he knew not what notions, without a plan, without any intelligible object, and a consequent necessity for order, the nature of which, however, he could nowhere discover, but which sufficed to make him utterly *dis*-believe God's moral government of the world, and at least *not* believe in the certainty of a future judgment;—all, these were tenets, or rather no tenets, which filled Evelyn's heart with horror. On the other hand, there was no assistance from authority or revealed religion—in which, if he did not utterly reject it, he had lost all confidence, and from which he derived no consolation.

In short, he was without even hope.

The effect of this in regard to any man, on the mind of Evelyn, may be conceived. But to see the man he loved, in many respects admired; one in whose mind so many good and even brilliant qualities met; one made for so much better things; and above all, one on whom his daughter might possibly ——— the thought harrowed him

With an agitation he could not conceal, and with even tears in his eyes, he grasped Tremaine's hand, and mournfully told him the distress into which the discovery had plunged him.

Tremaine, much moved, begged him not to despair for him. He confessed fairly that his mind was a wreck, but that he was himself aware of many sophisms; and that he was too uneasy under what he really hoped were delusions, not to hope that he might yet be enlightened. And he began, he said, almost to believe that Evelyn had been given him as his friend, for that very purpose.

With a brow a little cheered, Evelyn again pressed his hand. "Such candour," said he, "deserves every assistance. Need I say, that all I have the power of rendering, my best services, my heart's warmest zeal, are yours?"

Tremaine assured him he knew they were, and told him, at any rate, not to conceive literally that he was a determined infidel, and careless and indifferent, from being determined: but rather to look upon him as a philosophical searcher after truth, anxious and happy to find her wherever she might be.

Evelyn replied, that provided there were really no prejudices he hoped the search might prove neither difficult nor long.

"It will serve us many an hour," said Tremaine, "and will only knit us more closely together."

"Alas! my poor Georgina!" thought Evelyn.

It was then settled that they should lose no opportunity of discussing what was of such stupendous importance in the minds of both: the anxiety of Evelyn, however, being certainly not confined to the interests of one individual.

The multifarious, as well as absorbing interests which prevented these opportunities from arising, till all seemed hopeless and lost for all the parties concerned, will be found in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

MUTUAL CONFIDENCE.

> And I of ladies most deject and wretched
> Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
> Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

The rest of the day was passed by both the friends in much seriousness. Tremaine shut himself up at Woodington, after having asked Evelyn to stay with him at dinner, and then retracted the invitation. He thought, he said, it would do him most good to be alone: to which Evelyn observed he would for once assent.

At his own table, though enlivened by Georgina, and Careless,—who had complained of having been lately, as he said, much *cut* by them—Evelyn was himself remarkably thoughtful and did not enter into Jack's gossip about the neighbourhood by any means as Jack wished, or, to own the truth, as Evelyn was himself frequently inclined to do.

"This Mounseer Melancholy" (for so he sometimes called Tremaine) "seems to have infected you all," said Careless, after having in vain tried to bring out either the Doctor or his daughter in general conversation. "You used to like an account of a day's fishing, especially when I brought you the spoil, as I did to-day; a thing *he* never did in his life. However, my Becky is right about him, after all," concluded Jack.

"In what," asked Georgina, with some interest.

"Nay, you need not be touchy about it," returned the guest.

"Touchy!" said Georgina, with a degree more of whatever feeling she had shown.

"Why, yes! touchy; for you will never now let me have a laugh at the Woodington landlord; and the last

time we talked of him, you quarrelled with me for calling him Mounseer Melancholy."

Georgina slightly blushed at perceiving her father was examining them both, and was relieved by his asking Jack what it was Mrs. Becky had said.

"Why you see," replied he, "I would hold my Becky's judgment against that of e'er a she in the county. She often gives *me* good advice, not merely as to pigs and poultry, but upon the world. She has seen a great deal of the world, you know."

He said this hesitatingly, as if to know whether Evelyn would agree with him.

"No doubt," replied the Doctor. "A serjeant of militia's wife must necessarily know a great deal of the world, especially when she follows her husband to the wars. I think the West York has been all the way to Cornwall, and was full a year in Dover Castle."

"I think you are about quizzing me," replied Careless; "but if you were to hear Becky of a winter's evening, when she comes in to stir up my fire, and perhaps make my tea, while I am reading the York Herald, you would say she was no fool."

"But what is it she says of our neighbour?" asked Evelyn.

"Why, after all, to use her own expression, that he is but a bingle bangle man, and that no good will come on him."

"I should be sorry to think that," said Georgina, yet still with something like consciousness, at seeing herself again observed by her father.

"Becky says," continued Careless, "he is one of them men that thinks us all in the wrong box, and that none but themselves can get us out of it."

"That is a deep observation of Mrs. Becky," said Evelyn.

"Is it not rather taking a liberty with a person so much her superior," observed Georgina, "and ought you to encourage it?"

"How can I prevent it," returned Jack; "besides, it would hurt the poor creature sadly if I did not talk to

her now and then, and I should be as lonely and moping as the Squire himself. However, this is not all that Becky says."

"Pray edify us with the whole," cried the Doctor.

"I will, if you and Georgy won't snap me for it. She says no good will come on him in the way of matrimony, he has so many strange new-fangled notions; that he has used several young ladies very ill by shilly shallowing; and hopes he is not playing the same game with you, my dear Georgy. So now the secret's out."

Spite of Georgina's knowledge of Jack's abruptness, and, indeed, her almost expectation, though without knowing why, of something similar to this allusion, she became sufficiently uncomfortable at the speech to feel embarrassed.

Her father interfered, by observing, it was neither pleasant nor advantageous to have a young woman's name coupled with a gentleman's, and subject to comments from people who could know nothing about the matter."

"But they will do it," cried Jack, briskly, "and I could no more stop Becky———"

"Than yourself," observed Evelyn, with some gravity.

"I at least am in the wrong box, I find," cried Careless; "but I couldn't help thinking I was right in putting you on your guard; for if anybody, even Squire Tremaine himself, was to use Georgy ill, I'll, be———"

"Don't swear," said Evelyn, good-humouredly.

"Well, all I meant to say was, it should be the worse for him the longest day he had to live," concluded Jack.

"You are a true friend," said Georgina, stretching out her hand to him, and smiling; "but, indeed, in this case there is no occasion to try your regard."

"I am sorry for it," blundered Careless.

"That's odd, too," said Evelyn, "considering that it can only be proved in the way you talk of, by supposing your friend Georgy to be ill-used."

"Wrong again, I see," said Jack; "but what I mean

is, that I am sorry there is nothing in it; for Squire is a fine man, and a rich, after all—that is, if Georgy could fancy him. But to say truth, I could wish something livelier for her. He is more suited to Lady Gertrude than my lass."

"Let us change the conversation," said Evelyn.

"I am dumb," exclaimed Careless.

When Jack had taken his leave—which he did that evening early, having promised, he said, the mother of his god-child, who lived a mile or two off, to hear how well he could say the Primer—Evelyn, at her own invitation, walked with Georgina to the rookery.

They were each to the other unaccountably silent. The Doctor seemed much occupied with ascertaining when the colony would return to bed from their daily field excursions; and Georgina adopted the subject for a time, as if she thought no other was uppermost either with her father or herself.

At length, after playing a minute or two with his hand, she observed, "I think, papa, you said you had had a long conference with Mr. Tremaine, after church this morning?"

"I had indeed, my child," returned Evelyn; "and may the good God bless the result!"

"It was then interesting?"

"To the very greatest degree; and if I admire, I pity our friend more and more."

"Pity!" exclaimed Georgina.

"I must pity," said her father, "a worthy and highly-gifted man, who is evidently unhappy."

"Unhappy! and from what cause?"

"From the sad riot which prejudice and too much liberty and indulgence have made with his mind."

"Can Mr. Tremaine be that sort of person?" asked Georgina.

"He can, and is. And yet I have hopes of him: his heart seems in the right place."

"It seems an excellent heart to those who understand it," observed Georgina.

"Are you one of them, my girl?" asked the Doctor, shrewdly. "Is it a heart you have at all studied, or in which you have at all an interest?"

"Studied! interest!" echoed Georgina: "Oh dear, no! As your friend, and one you so often say yourself is fitted for better things,——and, indeed, he is very much improved of late——I say as one,—so fond of *you*; and, I may add, so kind and attentive to us both, ——that is, as—"

"Proceed," continued Evelyn, seeing her still hesitate; "I am really anxious to know what you would say."

"I scarcely know myself," said Georgina; "and, indeed, my dear Sir——"

"I won't be Sir'd," cried Doctor.

"Well, then, my dear father, as one who certainly shows the greatest deference for *you*, and a sort of respect and kindness in his manner towards *me*, which I cannot describe, but which no other ever showed——"

"You have seen no other, my dear," interrupted Evelyn, "but our friend Jack, and Lord St. Clair:—and, to be sure, lately, Mr. Beaumont, and Sir Marmaduke Crabtree."

"Oh! they cannot be named with him," exclaimed Georgina.

"And yet, except honest Jack, they are all men of fashion," returned her father.

"But not of feeling, of goodness, of delicacy," proceeded Miss Evelyn.

"I cry your mercy," exclaimed the Doctor; "I did not know you had been so well acquainted with these qualities in our world-hater."

"Oh,—he *hates* nobody—only dislikes impertinent poople, and is good and delicate to all. Witness his friend, Colonel Osmond, and Mélainie. And as for Lady Gertrude and Miss Neville, you yourself say you would have done as he did."

"He has at least an active defender in my good daughter," replied Evelyn; "and to that good daughter I must now seriously address myself, for I want to probe her little heart to the bottom."

It was well for Georgina that the evening sun had

> Stretched out all the hills,
> And now had dropt into the western bay;

in short, that the shadows were thickening apace; for the suffusion of her cheek she would have sought in vain to conceal. Some scattered rooks returning before the rest, made a show of diversion in her favour, and she, too, began to be curious about their motions: but recovering in a moment, and pressing her father's arm, she said, with a subdued, but clear voice, that she had not a thought she wished to conceal.

"There spoke my sweetest girl, my little confidante, my own Georgy," said the Doctor, delighted. "You heard," continued he, "the half meanings brought by our friend Jack to-day, the gossip, no doubt, of Mrs. Becky, but also, no doubt, of his and our own village, and probably of Woodington itself. And I own, my love, I have many reasons, much as I like Tremaine, why I do not wish your names coupled together: at least not until two or three important points are cleared."

"May I know them?" asked Georgina.

"You have the most entire right to do so," replied her father, "In the first place, I know nothing of our neighbour's heart."

Georgina was silent.

"That he is fond of woman's society, and naturally respectful, and even tender in his manner to them where he esteems, is clear. It is equally clear, (for how should it be otherwise?) that he esteems my sweet George."

These last words instantly dispelled all remaims of embarrassment, if there were any, in the mind or manner of the young lady; for whenever her father used the phrase of "my sweet *George*," she knew that her always high favour with him was then at the highest.

"Still," added Evelyn, "I know nothing of the real working of a fine gentleman's mind; and however abrupt and obscure, and I will say, unfounded, our good Careless's declaration may be, about the ill usage of young ladies, still it cannot be disguised that he has paid

attentions, impelled by his heart at the moment, which he has afterwards discontinued. I know it was his refinement that occasioned this, and I verily believe him the soul of honour; but whatever the cause, the effect upon the female is the same."

"Do you think then," said Georgina, "that Lady Gertrude was capable of that sort of love to be hurt by his loss?"

"I do not," replied Evelyn, "but she may be angry on other accounts, and at any rate is the talk of the world."

"True," observed Georgina, lost in reflection.

"Still," pursued Evelyn, "I do not mean that it is even possible for him to use a woman ill."

"It is impossible," cried Georgina.

"I say I believe so," rejoined her father—"but spoiled children may be capricious, and the disparity between us in point of fortune—though that," added Evelyn, checking himself, "cannot be,"—and his own disinterested, delicate mind, spoke for his friend, and banished the thought for ever.

"There spoke my dear father," said Georgina.

"But then again," continued Evelyn, "there is another disparity, which I have no doubt would weigh with him much, if it would not decide the thing against him with a mistress, supposing her to be young and lively as my little girl."

Georgina made no answer, and he went on to say, "All these things put together, have given me some painful doubts, even without another of a far more serious sort, as to the mind of this fastidious person; who, it it is evident, would allow his heart to burst, if he were really in love, which I know not," continued Evelyn, "that he is———"

"I am sure, nor I," rejoined Georgina, perceiving that her father waited for her; at the same time a suppressed sigh escaped from her.

"He would allow it to burst I say," continued her father, "rather than marry, or offer to marry the person he most loved on earth, if he were not sure that he was loved for

his own sake in return, whatever his faults, errors, or disparities."

"Can we blame him?" observed Georgina.

"No, indeed," replied Evelyn; "but all this bespeaks an uncertainty, which makes me, I own, tremble for my child."

"You must not, my dearest father; if I know myself, you need not."

"If!" said Evelyn.

"And why should I not?" asked Georgina, with firmness. "Has my heart usually so many concealments from *you*, much less from its mistress? Has it ever played me double?—ever refused to answer when I have tasked it?"

"No, indeed," said Evelyn. "You have ever been the truest, honestest being that ever father was blessed with; and may the Almighty Father of all bless you for ever for it!"

At these words he opened his arms, and Georgina threw herself into them, and wetted his cheek with tears as precious as virtuous feeling, joined to filial piety, ever shed.

Recovering themselves, they sat down on the bench which they had by this time reached. It was encircled by a thousand flowers, which, as well as the fresh grass of the adjoining field, seemed to emit peculiar sweetness: and the stillness and softness of the evening appeared such as they had never enjoyed before. But all this was in the mind; without which, properly attuned, neither flowers, nor fields, nor "grateful evening mild," will have any effect upon wayward man. "Tell me, then, my love," continued Evelyn, "for it is most fit I should know, how stands this dear heart towards this fascinating man—fascinating, with all errors?"

"Ah! those errors!" cried Georgina.

"What means my girl by this; and to what particular errors does she allude?"

"Alas!" replied Georgina, "I fear they are such as cannot be passed over. His little disgusts and prejudices about the world; his refinements and fastidiousness;

all these are nothing, or might be cured; or if not cured, might yield to his excellent qualities, his honour, sincerity, and generous spirit, to say nothing of his genius and his taste."

"Has he all this?" said Evelyn, in a tone of scrutiny, as well as some anxiety.

"I have promised to be honest," observed Georgina.

"Be so, my love."

"Well then," proceeded Georgina, "to me he has all this, together with a manner and countenance, and altogether a *gentility*, such as his years can never extinguish."

"That is going very far," observed Evelyn, with the same anxiety.

"But with all this," continued she, "and with what would be ten thousand times more——"

"What is that?" asked Evelyn hastily.

"A conviction which I am very far indeed from having—that he loves me——"

"Proceed," said her father.

"Even with that conviction, and that he sought my heart to be cherished by his, never could I give it him, while I believed that he did not think of heaven as——"

"As what, my love?"

"As a man who sought your daughter ought," concluded Georgina.

It would not be easy to describe the pleasure that filled Evelyn's mind at this speech. What had passed, had rather painfully convinced him that his suspicions of her partiality were well founded. He was at least not happy at the discovery, while so many uncertainties hung about Tremaine, the smallest of which was that which regarded his own state of heart. But the fear of his religious principles had weighed sorely upon this good father's mind. While they were even uncertain, to have seen an union between him and his daughter, was the thing on earth he would have most dreaded; and he foresaw nothing but the most anxious difficulty, for the first time, growing out of the fate of the innocent, pure, and amiable Georgina.

To have to combat and thwart the child of his bosom, the being he most loved on earth, in an attachment which, if properly sought for, everything connected with character, prudence, and honourable feeling, seemed to encourage, was the least part of his duty. To afflict such a creature in the tenderest point of her happiness—for the first time in his life to oppose a wish of his "sweet George"—that wish seemingly prompted by all that was natural, or that could be approved by the world,—this was what preyed upon him. Behold him in an instant relieved from all this, by the piety and firmness of the admirable creature himself.

No! no father ever felt so proud, so reasonably happy, so grateful! It was some time before he could speak.

At length, after pressing her to his bosom, he broke silence, and observed, "I always thought my darling Georgy might in everything be left to her own unassisted nature; but I could little have hoped to be so anticipated in my anxiety about her! This was the last point in order, but by much the greatest in importance, to which I was coming; for unless this can be cleared to our satisfaction, never could I be happy in thinking that he loved you. Never would I consent to give my angel to an infidel."

"An infidel!" exclaimed Georgina. "Good Heaven! what horror! Indeed, Sir, you *must* be mistaken."

"I have my fears," answered Evelyn; "he at least embarrasses me cruelly: for the mischiefs I had apprehended are deeper than we either of us had imagined. That he has been a *hopeless* Deist, which is the very worst sort of infidel, is I fear too clear; at best, a poor shipwrecked being, tumbled and tossed by every wave."

"It is too shocking!" exclaimed Georgina.

"At the same time, more candour, more sincerity I never met with; and I am sure he aims at truth."

"May we not trust to this?" cried Georgina. "Surely your last conversation on prayer has dissipated one error of the most serious kind: and I own I have thought of his ingenuousness ever since."

"There are monstrous ruins," answered Evelyn,

"and all to be cleared away before anything can be built up."

He then communicated to his daughter much of what had passed at the spring, and, in particular, the confessions he had made to a scepticism as wide as it was distressing, although not bereft of all hope.

Georgina assured her father he need not be uneasy for her, as, however she might feel disposed to think of Tremaine's charm of manner and conversation, yet she had two anchors for the safety of her heart—her ignorance of the feelings of his,—without a certainty as to which, were he even perfection, she ran no danger,—and the impossibility of her being touched by the vows of one so hardened as to deny the providence of Heaven.

Evelyn kissed her with an affection which even *he* had never shown before; and the relieved girl, though pensive for the rest of the evening, retired to very sweet slumbers, the reward and consequence of this tender confidence on the part of her father, and of the firmness as well as innocency of mind which had created it.

CHAPTER V.

CYNICAL.

This is some fellow
Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE morning saw Georgina earlier than usual among her flowers,—to the consternation of Mrs. Margaret, who, going at the ordinary hour to help her mistress in dressing, found that she had performed all that little service for herself. She had already, indeed, descended to a parterre she was very fond of, which somehow or

another exactly fronted the terrace and principal buildings of Woodington; and, with what reason we know not, Mrs. Margaret had long set it down to an interest about the master of Woodington, that Georgina was so often to be found viewing that fine place from her parterre.

At this moment, perhaps, she was not far wrong. The evening conversation (can it be wondered at?) had sunk deep in Georgina's heart. It was a heart she had promised to task upon the subject of this very person. The sun shone full upon the extensive pile, which at that moment contained him; and the sashes and casements reflected its rays in dazzling flashes, almost as far as Evelyn Hall. Could he fail to be thought of?

But will it be believed by any one *how* he was thought of?—Not, certainly, by the mere sons and daughters of the world; nor is it to them I write. There are even very amiable and good people, who have no particular opportunity of thinking or acting for themselves, but who would think and act rightly, if called upon, to whom Georgina's conduct may seem strange, certainly not common. Truth requires it to be told, that the first minutes of her rising were always dedicated to Heaven; and that on this particular morning, the preceding evening's conversation was so interwoven with her every thought, that Tremaine had a very large share of the prayers she poured out to that Power, which alone could enlighten his understanding or touch his heart. And never were purer prayers, and surely never was man more favoured than by having such an intercessor.

Now, how will this appear, when related to the young women of Georgina's age, rank, and condition, who flutter in the world without an interval of self-examination, without one instant of retired seriousness, and, above all, without a thought or a care as to the religious notions of those they call their lovers?

And yet attachments (or at least preferences) are supposed to be felt, even in the overwhelming dissipations of a Town life; and at Almack's itself, and (though that is scarcely credible) even among exclusives; it is *possible* that some one heart may be just so far abstracted

from the glare of self-sufficiency, and the love of general admiration, as to feel what for the moment may be called an interest about some other heart.

The thing, I allow, is extremely doubtful, being merely founded upon the fact, that marriages have been sometimes actually made up between certain people of suitable rank, fortune and connections. Still, however, it *is* possible; and if so, (for I must still put it hypothetically), let me ask what, even among these favoured beings, would be thought of Georgina, for the conduct that has been mentioned?

The answer will be, that as none of them ever prayed for themselves, or heard prayers at all, except at church, where decency compels them to go, the thing is totally out of their sphere—they cannot comprehend it. That they might respect Tremaine *while in town*, as a man of the first *monde*, a fine gentleman, whom it would be very convenient to encourage, they might allow; but as to his religion, it never occurred to them to inquire, nor was there the least occasion to be anxious about it. To pray for him, therefore (if they knew how), would be totally out of the question.

And who is it that would say this?

Reader, you know, and have seen them, and probably will start, when you find they comprehend many of your acquaintance, and probably yourself. Many of them are persons to whom you even feel bound to pay all the attentions of the world; nay, some of them, seemingly born to good, whom you really respect, and fancy you could love; but all, all are lost and confounded together, under one general uniform glare and glaze of manners, talk, dress, countenance, and conduct.

That this is the fate and character of the votaries of dissipation (that dreadful gulf which swallows up all innocency, and confounds *all* character), let him deny if he can who has lived in the midst of it. If he seek truth, let him tell you the progress of his observation for a few short years at Almack's, the Drawing-room, or other assemblies. Let him begin with a young girl of fashion the first year of her presentation! all nature,

dear unsophisticated nature, without a concealment, a design, or desire, or even a notion of appearing what she is not. Observe her bloom, her dazzling freshness, her mind, fresh as her cheek; her beaming eyes, her careless ease, her unstudied grace;—View her the second: less easy, less open, more upon the watch, more studious of the graces of art, and already almost acting. At the end of the period I have prescribed, behold her again. She is already faded, and if not married, irritated at not being so; *laying herself out* for that admiration which before had spontaneously followed her; an actress consummate, full of common-place, as well as affectation, in conversation almost blue, in face almost haggard.

Such, we have often heard Evelyn himself say, was the result of his observations, in his visits at intervals to Town, on the effects of dissipation, and the all-confounding nature of a mere town life. To those who lead such a life, this conduct of Georgina, will be utterly unintelligible.

Yet was she scarcely inferior to any of them, even in birth or worldly consideration. In beauty, manners, education and accomplishments, she exceeded them as much as natural grace can exceed that which is taught. And yet she was but a country girl.

Let me, however, not blame the rich and great more than they deserve. Heaven knows, they are more unfortunate than faulty. From leading a life totally artificial; from habits all fastidious; from the want of all interests which are the effects of personal exertion, to which (having everything done for them) they are for ever strangers;—from all this, their faculties can merely vegetate, and they would sicken and die of *ennui*, if they did not turn night into day. As it is, in the blaze of assemblies, where the most extravagant luxury courts them in vain to even the commonest emotions of goodness, if it were not for the vanity, they would sink, as they often do sink, into mere lifeless automata. But can vanity be always excited! and will not even this wear out? Alas! yes: or there would not be so much unreasonableness in the matter. Yes! vanity itself will

expire, particularly if the votary is meant by nature for better things : and let such a votary, before the spring campaign is half over, but put these simple questions to him or herself—Am I happy ? Is this enjoyment (if enjoyment at all) more than merely mechanical ?—Have I ever felt under this oppressive radiance, this load of luxury, any one single generous or tender movement of nature ? If the catechumen is candid will not the answer make him feel self-condemned ? and will not one walk "by a forest side or fountain"—one conversation (if ever he held one) with a daisied or primrosed bank ; while his mind glanced from the lovely colours to the beneficent Power that created their loveliness to soothe and cheer him in his pilgrimage ; will not this, I say, if he speak the truth, show the utter inferiority of luxury in the production even of pleasure.

Observe, however, I speak this to those only who have *past* the four or five probationary years mentioned in the beginning of this chapter ; in short, to those ladies and gentlemen who are no longer infants in the eye of the law, whatever they may be in that of common sense.

CHAPTER VI.

A DAUGHTER OF NATURE.

Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE subject grew so serious in the last chapter, and prompted so many ideas bordering on personalities ; so many Lady Janes, Lady Georginas, and Lady Katherines, seemingly born for dignity, or gentleness, or the sweetest, softest intelligence, yet marring all, either by indifference, impertinence, or an affectation of ungentle

satire; so many of these diurnal and nocturnal spectres of quality rose up before me, all threatening war on my country girl,—which war could not fail to involve myself in unpleasant, perhaps fatal consequences,—that I really felt it most prudent to fly the whole chapter, and return in a new one from Willis's, and Cavendish, or any other square you please, to Georgina's flower-garden.

Observe, reader, how I have guarded myself by the explanation in the important words, "any other square you please;" for far be it from me to insinuate that the particular Lady Jane, or Georgina, or Katherine mentioned above, is to be found in that particular square. If she is, it is surely the most unlucky square in all the town, and I the most unlucky of all the moral philosophers that ever presumed to meddle with a sophisticated lady of quality.

Thank heaven, Georgina was anything but sophisticated; and I present her to you in all the freshness and sensibility of her innocent mind, sucking the early morning air, with as much apparent pleasure and advantage as the flowers which surrounded her, and which in beauty in vain seemed to rival her.

Her beauty indeed was of that winning nature, that if a man by any chance but touched her handkerchief or her glove, much more her hand (if the glove were off), he was the happier for it the whole day long. At the same time she filled the heart with admiration of a much higher kind: for her goodness was so sincere, and of so soft a nature—there was such a gentleness in her animation, and every feeling she had was so founded in rectitude—that while the old seemed to vie with one another in approving, the admiration of the young was always tempered with a respect, which told them they honoured themselves in honouring her.

At the moment we speak of, she presented perhaps the most interesting spectacle the world could exhibit:—that of a young creature perfectly beautiful, and fully disposed by nature to encourage the most exquisite of our feelings, yet controlling all by a sense of piety to Heaven. That feeling, always so sweet, though generally so imperceptible,

which accompanies the agitation of an incipient passion; that dear delightful feeling so exquisite to the gentlest natures, which comes but once in our existence, and is therefore known by the name of first love; was, without her knowing it, about to take possession of her.

It cannot be disguised that her sentiments in regard to Tremaine, if all were well as to principle, wanted little to ripen into all that even *he* could have wished. It was not enthusiasm, nor the baby ravings of a mere girl; but it was a warm and rational interest, which might in time have amounted to rapture. It was in truth, founded in admiration of many parts of his character, and sufficiently in admiration of his person and manners to make her forget the disparity of their years. He was superior (how far!) to all the other men she had ever seen; even to the young Lord St. Clair, who had all but sought her. But in addition to this, his respect towards her was of that devoted kind which always makes its way into the heart of a young and feeling woman. He had even moulded himself anew, and in some things departed from what seemed his very nature, in order to please her. Could he fail therefore, with his superiorities of other kinds, his mental attainments, his personal elegance, and, added to all, his proximity to her on all occasions, to impress a mind peculiarly open to such impressions?—No! from the first he had been no common person with her; she saw him loved by her father; what wonder if she *almost* loved him herself?

But all this was now about to yield (perhaps not without a struggle) to the pure feelings of devotion to her Maker, with which that Maker had imbued her.

Her father's caution, his fears and anxieties, his affection, his praises, had encouraged and confirmed, but had not kindled her resolution: the decision was her own.

Oh! help him, you sweet Heaven!

was now her prayer, as much as ever it had been of Ophelia for that noble Hamlet, whose very name fills us with love for almost every quality that can inspire it.

To help and recover him from that "dreadful

shipwreck," that "monstrous ruin," talked of by her father; to build the edifice anew (and how fair she thought it would be, if it could be effected), was now her prayer to heaven; and every turn she took among her flowers, and every look she gave towards Woodington, she breathed this prayer in all sincerity, fervour, and humility.

In this situation, and with these thoughts of Tremaine, what was her surprise, what her confusion, (may we not add her pleasure?) in perceiving at the other end of the walk, and advancing rapidly towards her, no other person than Tremaine himself!

CHAPTER VII.

IN WHICH THE HISTORY DESCENDS A LITTLE.

I will speak to him like a saucy lacquey.
SHAKSPEARE.

The emotions which Georgina had undergone on his account were not lost upon Tremaine when they met. They gave indeed a pensive tenderness to her features, which, gay and lively as they were, naturally expressed sweetness still more than gaiety. This to him was perfectly irresistible: but even if they had not expressed this, in the disposition of mind he was in, it would not have been easy for her to have looked other than peculiarly beautiful.

But I have a very long story to tell, before I can come up to the reasons for this; and as it is absolutely necessary for the elucidation of the fact, I must beg my reader's patience while I relate it.

Tremaine had passed the whole of the preceding day, after his conference with Evelyn, in a manner that was new to him. For the first hour, indeed, he threw himself into a chair at his library door, where he seemed

immoveably lost in reflection, or to a cursory observer, occupied only with the contemplation of a sun-dial which rose a few yards off. His thoughts were profound, and his hopes lively; for they were founded in the confidence he now always reposed in Evelyn.

In proportion as this pleased him, (for it did please him,) he felt his veneration and affection for that excellent friend increase; and somehow or another, he never experienced this sort of sensation towards the father, without its spreading in a glow all over his heart towards the daughter.

I once consulted an exclusive upon the reason of this; but she professed herself ignorant of the whole affair. Monsieur Dupuis, it is to be presumed, understood it as little, though, being a Frenchman, he was infinitely more knowing in matters of sentiment than any exclusive of them all.

Twice had this person opened the library-door, and twice presented himself to know if Monseigneur would not dress, but without being perceived.

Monseigneur was a name he frequently bestowed upon Tremaine to his face, and almost constantly among the servants: and going in a third time, he saw Monseigneur resting with his elbow on the sun-dial, and his eyes upon heaven.

"Il est fou," said Dupuis to himself.

He however disclosed to him, that it only wanted "un petit quart-d'heure to dinner," and asked if he would not dress?

"N'importe," said Tremaine.

"Que diable!" answered Dupuis, loud enough to be heard.

"Allez-vous-en," rejoined his master.

Now though this was not said in a tone of anger, it was with just the air of a man utterly heedless of, and at best perfectly indifferent to, the person he spoke to. Monsieur Dupuis was offended.

"Il me compte pour rien!" said he, as he went, proceeding straight to the housekeeper's room, to complain of it.

"Soit fou, soit amoureux, il ne doit pas s'oublier vis-à-vis de moi," said Dupuis, entering the apartment.

Mrs. Watson protested she did not understand him.

"Il m'a manqué," cried Dupuis: for be it observed, whenever Monsieur Dupuis was greatly agitated, which he was upon this occasion, all the little English he had, failed him, and Watson was forced to endure whole tirades of French, before she could even guess what had happened.

"He mind me no more than Paillasse," cried Dupuis.

Watson, who was a woman of great simplicity, and little learned in English, much less in French, but withal a careful housekeeper, began to think of her beds, and wondered what strange comparison had got into the Frenchman's head.

"He mind me, I say," continued the valet, perceiving she did not understand him, "he mind me, I say (growing very red), no more dan de jack pudding."

"I suppose he no succeed wid de little Georgy," added the still irritated valet; "et cela ne m'étonne pas—I no astonished."

"What have you to do with Miss Evelyn?" asked Watson, drawing up with a degree of resentment.

There were indeed two or three points, in which her respect for Monsieur Dupuis' rank and situation in the family, mixed as it was with a little fear of him, always gave way to her own sense of dignity. One of these was the freedom of his remarks upon his master; and another, the familiar tone he sometimes used towards her favourite young lady, whom she never liked anybody to call even Miss Georgy, but herself. But simple Georgy, and still more, little Georgy, always provoked her spirit of propriety to assert itself, and she never heard it slip out, (as it sometimes did from Mrs. Margaret Winter, presuming upon having taken her from the nurse) without giving it a becoming reproof.

Indeed it was a little curious, and not at all unpleasing, to observe the sort of honour the good people of all degrees seemed to think they did themselves, in making use of this little affectionate diminutive of a name, not altogether common, and which some of them might have

found a difficulty in pronouncing. They might indeed have called her Miss Evelyn, and wherever she was not known, such was her title: but this was among very few. Except therefore to those few, perhaps just come into the parish, it seemed a gratification, a sort of raising of themselves to a notice and protection they were proud of, to speak to or talk of her, as Miss Georgy. To have called her Miss Evelyn would have looked as if they had been out of the pale of favour, and deprived of a familiarity which was very sweet to them all.

"What have you to do with Miss Evelyn?" asked Watson with displeasure: "and where are your manners, that you do not call her by her proper name?"

"Beg-gar," replied the angry valet, "mes manières be as good as *your* master."

Now this was a certain sign that he was not only very angry with Tremaine, but ready to quarrel with Watson herself: for on such occasions, by the stress he laid on the word *your*, he always by implication transferred the allegiance due to him as a master exclusively to Watson, and renounced it for himself.

"He is your master, as well as mine, I suppose," returned Watson.

"As he behave," cried the valet; "et pour la petite, là-bas, de little Georgy, I no astonish she no like him."

"I am sure you know nothing about the matter," observed the housekeeper, getting more and more angry.

"As much as you, and Madame la vieille fille, wid de cold name there; how you call her? Madame la Brumaire, and I say I no astonish dat de littel Miss she no like de old gentleman, when she get de young."

"If you mean my master," said Watson, struggling to keep her temper, and putting some dignity on the words "*my* master," for whom she felt all her own pride summoned, "he is not old; and as for the young gentleman, there is no such person, for I never heard of him."

"Dat no reason," replied the valet tauntingly, "and you better ask Madame la Brumaire."

"I am sure she does not know," said the housekeeper

with some eagerness, yet by no means amounting to confidence that she did not; "for if she knew, I should have known it myself."

"You no be sure of that," retorted the Frenchman, "besides, you no visit la grande Dame, miladi St. Clair."

"What of her?" asked Watson with some surprise, but changing to a tone of civility.

"A! ha! you ask me now," replied the Frenchman laughingly.

The laughing, and the sort of victory he thought he had attained in exciting the old lady's curiosity, and diverting her entirely from the defence of her master, put him in good-humour, and he was about to reveal to her the politics of the Mount St. Clair cabinet, which he said he had discovered from Madame Deville, old Lady St. Clair's own woman, and Monsieur Martin, my lord's own man,—when the dinner bell rang.

CHAPTER VIII.

MORE OF THE LOWER CABINET.

You know
What great ones do, the less will prattle of.
SHAKSPEARE

When Monsieur Dupuis joined his master, he was in consternation to find him sitting down, not to table, as he ought to have been, in the dining-room, but to a tray brought on a napkin to the library. He was still in his morning-dress, and pensive, amounting even to abstraction. His manner was absent, and the repast short.

To complete the Frenchman's astonishment, when the dessert was brought, he found the book he had chosen for his companion was the Bible.

"Le voilà absolument dévot," said the valet, as he took away the tray.

The incident was too remarkable not to be conveyed instantly to Madame la Concierge, who had invited him to take his coffee (for he despised tea) in her room. This she did from two motives; first to show that she was in perfect good-humour with him after their little fracas; next, because the hints he had dropt about the St. Clairs, and most particularly that Mrs. Margaret was in the secret, and concealed it from her, made it absolutely necessary she should know more.

"Le voilà absolument dévot!" said Dupuis.

But the difficulty was to explain the meaning of this to Mrs. Watson, who, even if she had understood the French language, could never be made to understand French manners; and as the whole was an enigma, except the word dévot, and Monsieur Dupuis could only explain that by the word methodist, his undertaking was not an easy one. In short, it ended in his assuring Mrs. Watson as a fact, without the trouble of reasoning, that Lord St. Clair was coming down to marry Miss Evelyn, who had in consequence refused the offered hand of her master, and that her master had in consequence turned methodist like herself.

The last intimation would have been a cordial to the heart of the good woman, could she have believed it; and she took occasion from the mere circumstance of its being possible, to give excellent advice to her light and licentious coadjutor, on the propriety of following his master's example. Far however from being won, Monsieur Dupuis asked her if she took him for one of the *canaille*, or if he looked like a man disappointed in love? He boasted that he and his master were, in this respect, very different people, and announced his intention of taking another place. "Ici," said the Frenchman, "je m'ennuie à périr." Yet of the designs of Mount St. Clair she could make out little or nothing, except that old Lady St. Clair had confessed her wish to Madame Deville, her woman, that her son should marry; and that Miss Evelyn, of

whom she had always been very fond, and was her relation, should be the object of his addresses.

Both the events however were, in the opinion of the pious Watson, not only within a contingency, but even a probability. The alliance had been the talk of the country till Tremaine came down; and in the midst of the conference on the report of the intended marriage, no less a person than Mrs. Margaret herself arrived to take part, and to confirm it.

"And yet," said Watson, "I shall be very sorry if this news is true. I love Miss Georgy so much, that I hoped she would have been my lady here; but Providence knows best."

"Indeed," observed Winter, "that's what I say; and as your master, Mrs. Watson, is so long about it, and St. Clair is quite as near to the Doctor as Woodington, and my lord so much younger, indeed so much upon the square as one may say with Miss Georgy as to age, and my old lady wishes it so much, and so very fond of her, and the house so gay, and all that —— why I think perhaps it's best after all."

"But is it settled?" asked Mrs. Watson.

"I can't make out exactly," replied the virgin; "but to be sure it will be without a doubt:—no shilly-shallying there; and I know my mistress was very serious indeed all the morning after she got the old lady's letter; and I listened when she and the Doctor were together, but could hear nothing, only I'm sure they were talking about it; and to be sure there will be a large jointer, as indeed so there ought, considering all Evelyn will be hers, and a handsome fortin besides."

"You seem to have quite settled this matter," said Watson with some stiffness.

"La! settled! no! only what must be, must be, you know."

"True," said Watson with resignation, and began to meditate upon predestination.

The result of all this was, that Dupuis, finding his friend Monsieur Martin was arrived, and that it was a very fine

evening, resolved to proceed to Mount St. Clair, as he said to *faire une reconnoissance ;* for which purpose he gave his orders to Jonathan the groom to saddle one of his master's horses; an order which Jonathan did not dare to disobey.

The two housekeepers, after half an hour's walk towards Evelyn, separated; each of them resolved, that very night if possible, to sound the intentions and feelings of their respective chiefs.

CHAPTER IX.

WHICH EVEN AN EXCLUSIVE MAY ALMOST UNDERSTAND.

When I would pray and think, I think and pray
To several subjects. Heav'n hath my empty words;
Whilst my invention, hearing not my tongue,
Anchors on Isabel.

SHAKSPEARE.

STRANGE as it may seem, though the chances of executing their purpose were altogether in favour of Mrs. Winter, the good Watson was nearest success. Mrs. Margaret indeed consumed an unusual portion of time at her young lady's undressing; had everything to pin and unpin, fold and unfold, as if she had suddenly become forgetful, lame, or awkward; relieving the delay, however, by an unusual portion of conversation, if conversation it could be called, where one of the parties alone seemed endowed with the gift of speech.

Georgina was in truth unusually silent, nay absent, and seemingly in no hurry to get to bed; which made her the less sensible of her duenna's uncommon slowness, but at the same time less alive to the hints and gossip with which she interlarded all the delays of the toilette. But though Mount St. Clair, and old Lady St. Clair's fondness for her young mistress, and the young peer's

arrival in the country, as well as his fortune, accomplishments, and good person, were often mentioned, Mrs. Margaret could in fact get nothing out of Georgina,—who seemed wrapped in thought, till her attendant was forced, from having exhausted all pretences for farther loitering, to leave her for the night.

A sanguine, keen mind, however, is never at a loss; that sort of mind which is formed for great exertions and discoveries, and causes all the great things that happen in the world. This prolific mind is precisely the same, whether in a statesman, philosopher, or chamber-maid; only in the last it is bent, for the most part, on merely discovering the secret; in the others, on turning it to political account, or twisting everything to an hypothesis; and this sort of mind to a certain extent did Mrs. Margaret possess.

She was quite sure, she said, that unless Miss Georgina had been thinking still of Lady St. Clair's letter, and that letter had contained the young lord's proposals, she would never have been so silent or so long in undressing. And this notion got such possession of her, that she would that very night have communicated her intelligence to her friend at Woodington, but that she was deterred by certain doubts and difficulties as to writing and spelling; in which it must be owned her education had been lamentably deficient.

We have said that Watson succeeded better; and as far as communicating to her master the great design of the St. Clair family, she did so.

Tremaine had been pondering the most serious thoughts and arguments, upon the great subject which had engaged him that morning with Evelyn. Never had either his head or heart been so full. He felt, in regard to the present state of his mind on religious subjects, that there was a connection between himself and his neighbours, for which he could not exactly account, but which he also felt was of infinite importance to him.

This was the subject of his long reverie before dinner; and it was the recollection that Georgina could never be otherwise than piously grateful in a fine day, that drove

him to the sun-dial. Here a thought struck him which led to long and deep reflection, in which the Bible became of the greatest consequence.

The dial, and its awful yet interesting accompaniments of all the wonders of the heavens, brought him, not indeed, for the first time, nor as if it were new, but peculiarly and cogently in his then frame of mind, to the admission, or rather firm conviction, that there must be a power, invisible, intangible, inaudible, unsearchable, yet Almighty, and always present, in us and about us; a power that, whether we were mere dust and worms, or allied to angels, was *able at least, if it pleased*, to direct and govern us.

Whatever became of free-will, or the theories in Tremaine's mind, in regard to "the order of things,"—"a necessary system, distinct from moral good or evil——" this interference or influence, call it what you please, had become at least possible.

The point, as I observed, was not new; but somehow or other it had never before struck him so forcibly, or gone so direct into his heart. All this he attributed to the sermon of the morning, nor did he therefore feel it the less. Well, then, interference was possible; and why not therefore, said Tremaine, probable?

Because, answered his scepticism, there is no proof in history of such interference. The Bible, however, instantly flashed across him, as contradictory to that assertion. The whole sacred history uprose before him, consisting of nothing else but this interference.

The thought led him to profound reflection, and reflection to questions too interesting not to pursue, develop, and critically examine them in the only book where they are to be traced. Hence his occupation, even to absorption, with the Bible, which had challenged so much remark from the sagacious Dupuis.

The lecture lasted as long as the light; and when that permitted it no longer, he stole out, with his mind full (we wish we could say satisfied), to arrange and digest his crowding ideas in the stillness which a walk, in

a very still evening, presented, as if on purpose, to soothe his perturbed sense.

How different from the Tremaine of his youth, or even of his later years, when the hero of high life, in the assemblies of London or Paris, the champion of party, or the fastidious criticiser, yet devoted admirer of the sex, he sparkled through a whole night, amidst a blaze of artificial elegance, which, however flattering to his senses, never, as we have seen, satisfied his heart!

The reason for this, as some very homely persons have thought, was plain, namely, that God and nature were not there. But this is a reason I will never venture to give the world, for fear I myself should be driven out of it. Indeed, I once propounded those very words to Lady Gertrude, but she frankly told me she knew nothing about them; "For," said she, with a *naïveté* which, all exclusive as she was, she was not altogether without, "are 'God and nature' necessary in any part of London?" I drew in; for I love a dear, elegant votary of artificial life from my soul. There is something so heroically insolent in an exclusive; such a noble conviction of his or her superiority over all the rest of the human race; such a philosophic independence of everything which people of mere nature look to for happiness; that I own I view them with a degree of awe and veneration. There is besides much real power of mind, in resisting, as they do, all that wealth, pomp, luxury and taste can effect, to please the eye, ear, and palate; all which an exclusive views, after the first acquaintance with them, without a single emotion; and this, I say, is so philosophically stoical, especially among mere young or fashionable people, that, in point of self-command, it beats the Zenos and Catos of antiquity all to nothing.

I confess, therefore, I do not recommend Mr. Tremaine, in the gloomy recesses of his avenue, pondering the attributes of the Creator, and the awful subjects of the Divine government of the world, either to the notice or favour of his former companions; still less as an object of envy,—for, far from being satisfied, he was still tossed in

a sea of doubt. All that was certain was, that he had become much of a renegado from his former feelings and prejudices—and parted with much of his fastidiousness, and was comparatively humble.

In this situation, and as the reader may think, in a fair way of realising the prognostics of that very superior person, Monsieur Dupuis, (whom, indeed, Mrs. Neville herself pronounced to be far beyond his master in all the requisites for a philosopher or a fine gentleman,) he was met by his housekeeper.

Tremaine's respect for her, as an attached old domestic, never allowed of these meetings without a word of notice or kindness: which, indeed, was the cause of much of that kindness she bore for him in return.

"You have had a pleasant walk, Watson," said Tremiane, "and probably from Evelyn Hall?"

"Only part of the way, Sir," replied Watson.

"I heard voices at the end of the avenue; was anybody with you?"

"Only Mr. Dupuis, Sir, and Mr. Martin, Lord St. Clair's valet."

"Lord St. Clair! is he in the country?"

"He came this morning, and——and there is the strangest report——" said Watson.

"Of what?"

"Has not your honour heard?"

"How should I?"

"I thought," replied Watson, hesitatingly, yet encouraged by this disposition to let her talk—— "I thought from your honour's intimacy with Doctor and Miss Evelyn——"

"Good God!" exclaimed Tremaine, with palpable eagerness, and it must be confessed, most unfashionably, if not unaccountably, off his guard, considering to whom he was speaking—"Good God! what can you mean?"

Mrs. Watson was not the most penetrating person in the world; but a woman who had been less so might have made, or thought she had made, a great discovery as to her object by the mode in which her master uttered this exclamation. I say, as to her object: because there

were a hundred different senses in which this very common exclamation might have been taken. It might have been curiosity;—indeed, ninety-nine out of a hundred would have set it down to that account. It might have been surprise, or fear, or concern, or the mere ordinary interest of a friend, or the selfish interest on what might affect one's own situation as a neighbour. It might also, it must be confessed, be the sensibility of a lover; and so Mrs. Watson construed it, for so she wished it to be.

"Good God!" exclaimed Tremaine, "what can you mean?"

"Nay, Sir, nothing, I believe, is settled."

"Settled! who? what? where?—tell me this instant."

"I thought your honour might have known," answered the straight-forward domestic, "that my Lord was coming a courting like, as one may say, to Miss Evelyn."

A thunderbolt at his feet could not have struck Tremaine with more surprise, or created more alarm, than this sudden communication, the ground for which he did not at all think it necessary to examine, but immediately set it all down as true.

I remember in a former chapter, I asked the reader if ever he had been in love. If he have, it will not be necessary to explain this; if not, I will not throw away my time by endeavouring to explain it to a critic who would be as invulnerable as Mr. Serjeant B—.

Everybody knew the late Mr. Serjeant B—. He had the best power of criticism that the most exact and accurate vision could confer. He never deviated from his path, never looked to the right or left. If then he sometimes disported himself in the sweet fields of fancy, it was always under the correction of this sound and sober judgment. Once he was engaged with a young gentleman of rather warmer feelings, but, as it will appear, much less penetration than the serjeant, on the merits of Richardson and Clarissa Harlowe.

"He was an ignorant man," said the serjeant.

"Surely, Sir," replied the young gentleman, (who I conclude was one of his pupils,) "he understood the human heart, and its most engaging as well as powerful

passion, love; and nowhere are the varieties and changeful feelings of that passion so accurately described as in Clarissa."

"Accuracy!" said the serjeant; "foolish boy! do you remember her will?"

"Not particularly."

"I thought so: go read it again, and you will find that not one of the uses or trusts therein mentioned can be supported: one would suppose he had never seen a conveyance in all his life!"

Now the serjeant B—s who read this may probably think the credulity described in Tremaine extremely unnatural, and may wonder, may even throw aside the book, because a man of his age and experience should have known no better than to believe at once this gossip of his housekeeper, without making a word of inquiry as to whether or not it had any foundation.

To rescue him and myself from this imputation, I must inform these critics, whoever they may be, that probably he did not inquire for proof, because proof was immediately tendered without being asked for; though I fear it will not much mend the matter, when it is stated what sort of proof this was. But it is my business to *tell* a story, not to *make* one.

"Mrs. Martin and Mrs. Winter say it is all true," pursued Watson.

"True!" exclaimed her perturbed master. "Then farewell——" but recollecting whom he was speaking to, he recovered himself.

"Good night to you, Watson," said he; which was a civil way of dismissing her; and he instantly bent his own steps towards Evelyn's house.

It was now the time that Milton talks of—

> By then the chewing flocks
> Had ta'en their supper on the sav'ry herb,
> Of knot-grass dew besprent.

The freshness of the grass and the mild evening air struck on his sense, as he hurried through the park; and his deer, who were at their night browse, scarcely fled at his approach.

"These are the scents and sights she loves," said Tremaine to himself; "but if she marry St. Clair, she will not have them to love. She will be buried in London, or, at most, at Brighton, all the year; and the only country she'll know will be the road between them."

"Is it possible it can be?" continued he, hurrying his steps. "What a fool, not to ask Watson the nature of her authority!" He stopped.

"And yet it is very possible," added he, proceeding. "He is young, handsome, noble, and rich, and so far he is made for her."

The thought preyed upon him, and he quickened his pace till he almost ran.

"But what is he else?" continued Tremaine; and he stopped again, clasping his hands.

"Has he any one of her tastes? any one of her opinions? has he *any* tastes or *any* opinions? can he value or even understand her mind? can he give her a heart equal to hers? has he any heart to give? No: she may not be made for—for *me*," said Tremaine, "but was she made for *him?*"

Thus raved Tremaine (for it was raving); and the end of this soliloquy brought him within half a mile of the spot which contained the subject of it. How different his present musing from that which had absorbed the last hours! Of all the qualities that belong to the mind, surely its versatility is the most remarkable. The immortality of the soul, the interference of Providence, the law, and the prophets, all were forgotten in an instant, and his whole heart, mind, and memory were fixed, absolutely riveted, upon one little being, in comparison with whom all that was, or had ever been in the world seemed nothing.

In this frame of thought, he arrived at the end of that long walk of elms which we have described as leading up to Evelyn's house, before he had scarcely asked himself why he had proceeded thither.

It was time at least to do so; for what he had to say, or how to announce himself when he arrived, he had by no means settled.

" As they have not mentioned it to me themselves, it will be thought impertinent to come at this late hour, or indeed at any hour," said Tremaine, " to force a confidence which is evidently premature. Besides, am I prepared—have I any right to expect, or believe—can I even hope, if it is even not too late?"

These reflections again arrested his progress, and he threw himself upon one of Evelyn's seats, whence he could observe the lights which gleamed from almost all the windows of the house not yet closed for the night, and which, though only carried by the servants traversing the different rooms in their usual household occupations, created ten thousand fancies to his possessed imagination, the least of which was that St. Clair and his mother were already there, perhaps to remain the night. In the midst of the melancholy and brooding caused by this, a spaniel which belonged to Georgina, and of which she was very fond, (feeding it herself, and making it the constant companion of her walks,) strayed from the house, night-hunting, and coming near Tremaine, soon made him out. He was indeed himself very fond of this little animal, delighting to stroke and caress her; for which Georgina had more than once repaid him with a look worth a kingdom.

" Good Heavens!" cried Tremaine—" Flora!"

The dog, instantly recognising his voice, leaped on his knees, wagging her tail with every demonstration of joy; and, upon being patted on the head, licked his hand, and searching for the bend of his arm, (a trick which she was particularly fond of,) placed her head in it, and seemed to compose herself to rest.

This little incident, in his then disposition of mind, totally unmanned our metaphysician and man of refinement; and let Lady Katherine or Lady Georgina laugh at him as they please, his eyes were actually suffused with what at another time would have made him heartily ashamed.

Reader, I again ask, wast thou ever in love?

CHAPTER X.

IRRESOLUTION.

> What man art thou, that, thus bescreen'd in night,
> So stumblest on my counsel?
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

WHETHER the reader of this history has been in love or not, he will readily admit that, at the end of the last chapter, we left Mr. Tremaine in a very fair way of emulating any hero of romance on record. And yet he was found the next morning in his own bed!

The truth is, he and the dog remained in the same position we have described for full half an hour; during which, the former revolved many plans and resolutions. He would go in and ask an audience of Evelyn—perhaps of his daughter herself. He would at least ask if the news he had heard were true. He would, perhaps, as a mere friend, caution Georgina not to throw away her fine mind and natural tastes upon a man whom it would be his duty, in the aforesaid character of friend, to represent to her as what he was—originally, a man of much pretension, but dwindled down into a good-natured dandy. Perhaps he would throw himself at her feet, and ask if the eternal love and admiration of a heart fully capable of appreciating hers, and twenty thousand a year to boot, could make up for twenty years' difference of age. No; he would not mention this last; for it would be to wrong, it would be treason against his dear Georgina, to suppose she could be influenced by such a thing. Besides, it would wrong his own pride in its very tenderest point; and he blushed at having, for the single instant it flashed across him, entertained so grovelling a thought.

But pray a truce with your perhaps, and be good enough to let us know what Mr. Tremaine *did* do in the emergency in which you left him?—Alas! for dear

romance—he got quietly up from his seat, and walked home again.

In fact, the poor gentleman was disturbed in his council of plans, before he had time to decide upon any one of them; for, the house being now shut up for the night, and Georgina missing her dog, the servants were sent in quest of her; and a footman coming up the walk, calling Flora, the little animal, being herself wholly free from the passion that agitated Tremaine, and, at the same time, not at all disposed to pass the night under a tree, when there was her own comfortable basket in Georgina's dressing-room, courting her repose, sprang from his arms at the sound of the footman's voice, and, in a few minutes gave herself up to the care of Mrs. Margaret.

Tremaine, being thus interrupted before he had time to come to a decision upon any of his plans, and being, moreover, really apprehensive of the strange appearance it would have, should he be discovered at that time of night so close to his friend's house, he, as I said before, very quietly got up and walked home; as any tolerably prudent man would have done under similar circumstances.

On his return he found the house in some wonder at his absence. The hall was full of lights, the great door open, and up and down the broad walk before it appeared the figures of the two coadjutors in domestic power, the authors of all his perturbation—dame Watson and the respectable Dupuis.

The good woman was in effect in real anxiety about her master, especially as she had sagacity enough to have observed that the news she had told him had been received with anything but composure; and as the great clock had now long struck midnight, fears of accident, if not of something worse, began to haunt her imagination; and, as she really loved her master, her perturbation was unfeigned.

Dupuis, who loved him too (about as much as a minister, who, by means of a party, has forced himself

into power against inclination, loves the person of his king), had played with the poor woman's fears to his own no small amusement, and indeed self-admiration; for every surmise on his master's absence, in which he was not at all sparing, had all the effect he could propose or wish, upon the housekeeper's fears.

"He in a fit," said Dupuis; "he tumble down de cascade! he drown himself for love! he go kill de milord in de duel!"

The climax was more than she could bear, and the well-intentioned housekeeper was really in agony, when her master appeared.

"Oh, Sir!" she exclaimed, "you have so frightened us! I am so glad to see you safe!"

"I frightened out of my wits," cried Dupuis.

"At what?" said Tremaine, abruptly; then desiring Watson to bring one of the lamps into the dining-room, he executed the resolve he had made on his way home, to question her as to the authority of her report; a conduct which our readers may wonder he had not adopted long before.

Being now, then, rather more collected, and interested in a very keen cross-examination, and, withal, having no very skilful person to deal with in the art of disguising truth (to which we always desire to add neither was she inclined), he soon found that, in effect, he had very little reason to be sure that a proposal on the part of Lord St. Clair was ever resolved upon; still less that it had been made; least of all that it had been accepted.

And yet, for all this, Tremaine felt by no means safe.

CHAPTER XI.

INTRIGUES OF THE LOWER HOUSE.

> But marriage is a matter of more worth
> Than to be dealt in by attorneyship.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

THE history of the thing was this; only part of which, however, was known to Watson herself. Old Lady St. Clair, who was a very harmless, affable, easy woman, had passed the last seven years of her widowhood much abstracted from the world, and the last year of it, from infirmity, almost entirely in the society of Madame Deville,—who united in herself the capacities of companion and waiting gentlewoman. It was on this account, perhaps, that her lady was in the habit, as most such old ladies are, (and as poor human nature sometimes requires from us,) of unburthening herself of her thoughts, whatever they may be, to the said Madame Deville, or, indeed, to any one near her whom she might think a friend. A visit from her son, once or twice in a year, for a week or so at a time, and a very few periodical visits from a few scattered dowagers like herself, who inhabited a circle of some eight or ten miles in diameter, gave her the only chances she had of seeing any one out of the precincts of her own domain. Now and then, indeed, she was enlivened by Georgina, whom she loved, and her father, who was her kinsman, and often her adviser. But for the rest, Madame Deville was the sole depositary of her confidence, such as it was. This, and novel reading, washing her china, polishing India cabinets, and now and then a course over her garden in a Bath chair, with Deville by her side, formed her life; not an unhappy one, for she had no hankering beyond it.

In this seclusion she cultivated the only worldly plan she had left,—that of her son's marriage: and, it must

be confessed, a person of far greater means and opportunities might have fallen on a worse scheme for him than she did, when she fixed her choice, could it be realised, upon Georgina.

Of course Deville was her confidante in this, as in everything else; and every visit made by Georgina, by developing something new to love, only confirmed the wishes of the good old lady. Many were the letters she wrote, or rather dictated on it, to her son, (for her infirmity often made that task devolve upon Deville,) in which the worldly advantages of the match were not forgotten. And, to say truth, the whole proposal was not thrown away; for the young peer, besides having no indisposition to either Georgina's person or fortune, was in a very eminent degree tired of himself.

Of this, the following letter may be an illustration.

"White's, November 20th, 1814.

"DEAR MOTHER,

"I received all your six last letters on the old subject; but, what with shooting, politics, and a number of other odd things, I had no time to answer them. All I can say is, I have no objection to be married, for I assure you I have no affair on my hands, and assure you I have long been heartily tired of Pauline. But you know it is cursedly troublesome, besides being quizzical, to go what is called a courting; and, as I told Lady Gertrude, I'd be hanged if I would dance after her any more; and I really think Miss Evelyn, with a winter in town, might do. I've no objection to your making up the match for me if you can. But I really cannot come myself, as I really am engaged to go to Melton to hunt, so believe me

"Your affectionate son,

"ST. CLAIR.

"P. S. Mrs. Neville writes word that Tremaine is always at the Doctor's, and that there was no truth that he was married to the French girl. As he is a devilish odd fellow at flirtation, though so old, and is at any rate

devilish rich, you had better take care of him. Now don't say any more I don't attend to things, as I give you this caution."

Whether the good dowager was most pleased or displeased with this letter, is uncertain. She was certainly pleased with the *carte blanche* it gave her; but in the end she informed her son that Miss Evelyn was not a girl to be had for asking by a third person, and that it was absolutely necessary, to insure success, that he should come himself.

All this passed under the notice, and indeed through the hands of Deville, who, in fact, was both zealous and sincere in her exertions to second her old lady's design; for she was actuated by a very great sense of duty and attachment to her patroness, and not in the least (as she most strenuously asserted herself) by a conditional promise of being remembered to double the amount of a legacy which she knew stood at present against her name in that lady's will.

To prove her attachment, however, to her mistress (we will say nothing about the legacy), and wanting assistance in other quarters, she opened a correspondence with Mr. Martin, to give her regular intelligence of the young lord's feelings and conduct as to others, as far as he could discover them; and, moreover, as she shrewdly suspected that Mr. Tremaine's intimacy at Evelyn Hall might at all events affect the case, Mr. Martin was also instructed to sound Monsieur Dupuis upon this occasion. One link was still farther wanting—namely, a proper confidant at Evelyn Hall; and as, among the males there, there were none, according to Mr. Martin, but cloddies, Mrs. Margaret was the only person that could be looked to, and she could only be got at through Mrs. Watson.

Hence the whole concatenation.

Watson of course could give little of all these motives to Tremaine; and we have merely revealed them to the reader now, because it seems a more proper place than any other in this history. But the facts, with such glosses as they had received in passing from one to the other,

Watson willingly disclosed in answer to Tremaine's questions; who, after all, gathered thus far and no farther —that Lady St. Clair and her son were desirous of the alliance, could it be brought about. And though, as far as the opinions of all these good gentlemen and ladies went, not only had the match been proposed, but approved, still it amounted to opinion merely.

Nevertheless, it kept Tremaine awake the whole night; and he left his bed at early morning, resolved to seek out Georgina and her father immediately, and at least open the subject, to whatever conclusion it might lead.

Thus have we accounted, in the most satisfactory manner, for that early meeting of Tremaine and Georgina in the garden at Evelyn Hall, which has been recorded in the sixth chapter of this eventful history.

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH THE READER WILL PROBABLY BE DISAPPOINTED.

> In her youth
> There is a prone and speechless dialect,
> Such as moves men. Besides, she hath a prosperous art,
> When she will play with reason and discourse,
> And well she can persuade.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

I NEVER could make out what it was that detained the Doctor so long when Tremaine called upon him thus early in the morning, so that he had to seek his young hostess, because there was no host to receive him. It is certain he did not feel sorely mortified at the task put upon him, or rather, which he had put upon himself, of seeking the Doctor in the garden, taking the chance of what he should find there besides.

And if he found there the fairest flower of that garden, in the person of its mistress—the flower which in all the world he most sought for, and most wished to wear—

breathing all its sweets, and seemingly in the happiest state for his purpose—if he did this—why Mr. Tremaine, as many a hero of romance had been before him, was a very fortunate man.

Georgina complimented him upon his early rising, and would have rallied him upon his improvement in this point, but that rallying him just then upon anything was the farthest from her thoughts. She had besides been so little accustomed to be alone with him, that her first impulse was to look around for her father, and her next, to ask Tremaine whether he had seen him, and where he had left him?

To her surprise she found that he was seeking him in that very walk, of which, from being newly made, and the production of their united taste, he knew they were very fond.

It had, indeed, every thing to delight and to soothe every faculty and feeling of the mind, and invited to contemplation as much as it courted the senses. It was what is called a green walk, shaven so close and so frequently, that no velvet was softer to the feet. It was perfectly straight, so that a thoughtful person might pace up and down, indulging whatever reverie he might be in, without danger of being interrupted by a false step. It was sheltered from observation, on the garden side, by a long row of espaliers of the finest fruit; while on the other it was bounded by a retired mead, which no profane person ever visited. From this it was only divided by a quickset hedge, kept very trim, but purposely low, in order to open the full view of the park and towers of Woodington. It was at present in a perfect blaze of glory with roses, Indian pinks, convolvulus, and poppy, interspersed everywhere with a profusion of mignonette. At one end was a summer-house, in which Evelyn delighted to take his evening tea; at the other, separated by a rustic gate, was the rookery, which has already been honourably mentioned. The sun was now high, and to avoid the glare of his beams, Georgina and her companion entered the summer-house.

And here, reader, no doubt thou expectest that decla-

ration and that acceptance of love, which, in closing this history, would put an end to thy trouble and to mine at once.

But in point of fact, though Tremaine rose from his bed with great courage, and was resolved to put the report about Lord St. Clair, and perhaps even his own fate, out of doubt that very morning, and though no recess that ever lover sought for a declaration (the old gentleman away, the young lady alone, and full of kind thoughts of him), presented so fair an opportunity to resolution, or even to bashfulness—notwithstanding all this, my determination to tell only what I know obliges me to add, that both the gentleman and the lady, almost immediately on their entering the above-named summer-house, fell into neither more nor less than a dissertation on the delights and uses of a garden!

Whether it was that Tremaine thought it most prudent to introduce the chief topic of his visit to Evelyn alone; or that Georgina, still full of her morning thoughts, wished to make her garden subject a vehicle for other sentiments, in which she hoped, rather than expected, Tremaine would agree with her;—all this is more than we can decide upon. We shall, therefore, proceed to our more humble but not less useful task, of merely reporting what we have learned.

"Exclusive of its pleasantness to the sense," said Georgina, "there is this advantage attending a garden, that every walk in it may be made sacred to some one or other of our happy recollections. In one you have cultivated the flowers that adorn and perfume it; in another you have made acquaintance, perhaps for the first time, with some picture or secret of nature; in a third you may have made acquaintance with yourself; in another again, you may have enjoyed the conversation of the friend you love best."

Oh! that I were that friend! thought Tremaine.

"But this even is not the least," added Georgina, hesitatingly.

"I so delight to hear you," said Tremaine, seeing her pause, "that I cannot help begging you to proceed."

The word *delight*, on which Tremaine laid a peculiar emphasis, called a slight blush into her cheek. She went on, however, with a little hesitation—

"Perhaps I am venturing upon things of too grave a nature, and which Mr. Tremaine may blame as affected, or at least as not belonging to my age."

"It is the very last thing that can be attributed to you," exclaimed Tremaine.

Georgina was touched with the air of respect with which this was uttered; she became pensive, and for a moment was without reply. Recovering herself, she went on.

"What I meant to observe," said she, "was, that the secrets of nature are not those alone with which a garden brings us acquainted; for in a garden we have the best opportunities of getting acquainted with ourselves. It is so retired," continued Georgina.

"More so than the closet?"

"Perhaps not—but more soothing; more powerful in opening the heart to itself."

"I should like to hear you explain this," said Tremaine, "for you seem to speak from experience."

"I do indeed," replied Georgina, "and my father—"

"Remember," interrupted Tremaine, "I want your own sentiments, not papa's. Yet do not think me impertinent."

"That is the last thing any body can think of Mr. Tremaine."

"If you knew how very much I dislike that formality of title from my friend's danghter, you would not use it. Am I not your father's brother? His scholar?" and he paused, as if embarrassed with his recollections.

"I wish you *were* his scholar," said Georgina, gravely.

"I would rather be yours," replied he, leading her back to the subject. "You were about to tell me the effects of a garden in bringing you acquainted with yourself."

"I meant," said Georgina, "that the solitude of a garden is no place for concealment. Everything in the face of nature is so open, that we are afraid not to be so

ourselves. The flowers and blossoms, the fresh earth, the air, the birds, all seem to look upon us with kindness. If I may so say, Nature herself is candid, and will not let us be otherwise."

"A pretty thought," said Tremaine, "but what use do you make of it?"

"It puts one upon self-examination," replied Georgina: "we task our hearts and dispositions, our errors, and faulty thoughts."

"Faulty thoughts in you!" exclaimed Tremaine.

"Oh yes! a thousand; and when I find them too strong to bear, I fly to such a walk as this, and out they all come."

"What a charming confessional!" observed Tremaine; "but where is the confessor?"

"He is everywhere," said Georgina, looking up and around her with reverence. Tremaine sighed, and Georgina knew, or thought she knew, the cause of that sigh. Her father's doubts about him, her own fears, and the resolutions of both, should those doubts and fears not be done away with, all flashed across her with the quickness of thought. It was a moment of pain, not at all lessened by the feeling that Tremaine never looked so interesting, or seemed so attentive, so particular, so occupied about herself.

"Seriously," said Tremaine, "is it possible so pure, so innocent a creature, can have ever had occasion to task her heart, and correct her disposition?"

"You are not my confessor," replied she, playfully: "but I have no scruple to own that in these walks I have attempted to correct what was wrong in me, and to——." Here she again stopped, from a compound feeling that she might be going beyond her strength, or, what was worse, that her companion might think her affectedly sententious.

"To do what, my dear Miss Evelyn!" asked Tremaine.

"To implore assistance of Him, in whose Providence —it pains, it distresses me——," she here breathed quick, fluttered, and grew absolutely confused.

"Good God!" exclaimed Tremaine, "what can thus agitate you?"

"I will disguise nothing from so kind a friend," replied Georgina, recovering herself.

"What I meant was that it pained me, as it does beyond all description,—if you will forgive me for saying this——"

"Forgive you, Georgina! alas! that such an angel should interest herself—if she does interest herself," added he, thoughtfully.

"We are all interested," returned Georgina, "more, perhaps, than you imagine; for your neighbours would be far happier in thinking Woodington was inhabited again, if Mr. Tremaine agreed with us more on certain points than he does."

Tremaine was silent, but his gestures became agitated to a perceptible degree.

"You have the goodness of heaven," he exclaimed: and Georgina, beginning to be alarmed at the boldness she had ventured upon, observed, with a retiring sort of manner, mixed, however, with sweetness, only still more sweet from the contrast which it formed with her *retenue*, "Mr. Tremaine will, I hope, remember, that, if I am too unreserved in venturing upon these thoughts, and, in particular, upon this subject, it is my father who has encouraged me so much to open myself. And remember, too—" and she here looked down, and, with a softened voice, added, "it is my father's friend with whom I am conversing."

Her gloveless hand here began to be affected with a violent disposition to twirl a rose she had held in it till now; and she did twirl, and twirl, till it fell all to pieces.

Tremaine looked at her countenance, and then at her hand, and then at her countenance again. It seemed the most modest, ingenuous, meaning countenance he had ever beheld,—and as for the hand, it was the whitest, smallest, softest, most taper, most like a lady's of the best blood in the kingdom (as, indeed, her's was) of all hands he had ever seen.

"And am I only your *father's* friend?" said Tremaine, laying much stress upon the word.

"Oh! yes, you are too kind not to be the friend of all who belong to him."

"You believe me, then, yours, Georgina?"

"Yes! indeed! and in the encouragement you give me to say what I think without reserve, I could almost fancy you my father"—(Tremaine did not like the comparison)—"for you are as like him in kindness," added Georgina, "as you are unlike him in almost everything else."

Tremaine revived.

Now, though Georgina might, and, in fact, did mean to apply this, among a great many other differences of a personal nature, to the almost constant difference of opinion between her father and Tremaine, even less vanity than his, particularly with his present wishes almost uppermost, might have left, as he did, the mental differences quite out of the question. In truth, there was a great opening for him. He might translate Georgina's difference a thousand ways. The Doctor's plain figure and dress; his brisk voice and language; his unceremonious manner; all very well for a father, but not at all suited, as Tremaine thought, to a lover. Then, again, many of the Doctor's old-fashioned tastes; his love of country business, and what Tremaine thought the drudgeries of his life; all this he imagined it no disadvantage to be *unlike*. His refinement began to take possession of him, and, in the quick glance of his thought, perhaps with a vanity not unpardonable, considering the circumstances, he was not sorry to believe that the application to him of the word *father*, by Georgina, would not hold for a moment.

"I think," said he, "I know not why—my feeling is quite undefined about it," and he stopt.

"And what does Mr. Tremaine think?" asked Georgina, turning her eyes full upon him.

The inquiry and the look together were more than he could bear. There was a softness in her whole countenance, yet so full of modesty, so innocent, yet so

conscious, and her consciousness, like Tremaine's, so undefined even to herself, that the conversation stopped from sheer want of power in the parties to carry it on.

"I think," said Tremaine at last, "and yet my difference in age tells me it is ridiculous, as well as presumptuous, and I cannot sufficiently——" Here he again paused, and even stammered. But for this pause there was now a reason, even if his own difficulty had not occasioned it; for Georgina's face, first turning very pale, became suddenly crimson; it was indeed an entire suffusion of blushes; her heart seemed to beat as if it would have broke through her stays; her eyes turned anywhere but towards him, and her respiration became impeded.

"Good God!" said Tremaine, "what can have affected you? I fear you are not well."

"It is only the heat," said Georgina; "the morning is close; more air will revive me;" and she rose to quit the summer-house. Tremaine with some surprise, and no small concern, rose also to attend her.

"I wonder if my father is returned," continued Georgina, taking first one walk, then another, with a very hurried pace, then turning into an alley that led to the house, and moving fast towards it.

Now let those who understand a young lady's heart better than I do, even the most innocent, natural, unaffected heart in the world; let those, I say, explain this movement of this plain-minded girl, this guileless opposite to all coquetterie. Or is there indeed a little tinge of coquetterie so infused and mixed up in the very elements of the sex (with a view no doubt to interest and enchain us still more, by the little agreeable uncertainties that belong to it), that, if there were sexes in heaven, the female angels themselves would, perhaps, not be without it? But, no! that is *not* it; for there was not the smallest spark of it in the whole composition of Georgina.

And yet here was an opportunity, real or supposed (and it makes no difference which), for an explanation of sentiments, her uncertainty about which had formed part

of her uneasiness. That the manner and language of Tremaine had created an expectation of something critical to her present state of feeling cannot be denied. Her father had openly expressed his wish that their present situation should be put an end to, one way or the other; it was also her own most serious desire; and yet here, where the occasion had seemed actually to have arisen, and a fair hearing to be the only thing wanting, the hearing was avoided, and to seek her father was made a pretext for leaving the only man in the world she admired, in the moment when his conversation seemed to have grown the most critical to her happiness.

In a word, it was those principles and promises which had occupied her heart so entirely during the morning, that had caught the alarm. She could not flatter herself that Tremaine's opinions, if so wrong as her father had represented them, could have become suddenly right; and she dreaded lest the declarations to which his last words seemed to be leading, should force her to decide in a manner the most bitter to her own heart which she could possibly conceive.

Yet did those words excite all her curiosity, her interest, her most powerful feelings, and hence her tremor, her struggle, and ultimate flight.

Tremaine, at first alarmed, and afterwards puzzled, made every effort to understand her. He entreated her to take his arm—but the still predominant fear of her mind made her avoid it, till at length, approaching the house, she flew from him, and sought her chamber, leaving him confounded.

The absence of the Doctor still continuing, his first impulse, in which no doubt there was an infusion of the pride which always more or less belonged to his character, was to return home, and leave capricious ladies to themselves. But Georgina deserved better of him; and, contrary to all that he would formerly have done in the same situation, he resolved to await an explanation, which he was sure she could satisfactorily give of her conduct; in all which we must at least allow he showed great signs of an improved character.

But, alas! was it satisfactorily to explain, that she had listened to Lord St. Clair, and, therefore, could not listen to him? for so now his fears began to interpret the matter. All further surmise, however, was for the present forbidden by the approach of Evelyn himself, inviting him to the breakfast-room, calling Georgina at the same time, and declaring he was almost famished by a ride to Mount St. Clair.

"What could take you there so early?" asked Tremaine, with some emotion.

"My lady cousin sent for me to come as early as I could," replied Evelyn; "and as the morning air is my delight, I took her at her word, and was there by eight o'clock. Neither my lady cousin, nor my lord, were, however, stirring; and, though my lord sent word he would be with me in a moment, yet, as I knew what a dandy's moment was, especially at a toilette, I thought it best to tell him to follow *me*, and so came home again, though, for the sake of the morning, by a round-about way."

Not proceeding with the subject, Tremaine thought it might be intrusive to question him farther; and the entrance of Georgina, restored, but still a little conscious, and busying herself with great activity about the breakfast things, diverted him then from farther inquiries. The visit, however, to Mount St. Clair gave him a pang from which he could not recover, and Evelyn perceived, and, perhaps, would have noted his distraction, if Georgina herself had not attracted his raillery by fifty mistakes at the table,—one of which was to break a china cup, for which she would have been well scolded by her father, but that, at the same time, she scalded her pretty fingers, and suffered so much greater an accident as to turn all his rage into concern.

CHAPTER XIII.

A MISHAP.

For Imogen's dear life take mine,
And, though 'tis not so dear, yet 'tis a life.
SHAKSPEARE.

This accident was neither more nor less than that, in endeavouring to save the cup, she entangled her reticule in the foot of the urn, and, in withdrawing the one, the other was overset, and would have emptied its scalding contents, red hot iron and all, into her lap, had not Tremaine interposed his hands, arms, and almost his whole body, to save her from the danger. By consequence, he received all the damage himself, which was, in fact, not a little; for, exclusive of a good scalding through his clothes, the iron seared the entire skin off one of his hands, in snatching it from her dress, with which it had already come in contact, and instantly set it on fire, though it was as instantly extinguished by her active protector.

As this occasioned a real disaster to our hero, it became an event. The Doctor was seriously distressed; and Georgina, exclusive of her gratitude for being saved from a cruel and dangerous accident, was so affected at his evident suffering, as well as the proof it gave of his eager desire to save her, that, after venting a little shriek, she sank into her chair, and burst into tears.

Every one of these tears was delicious to the heart of Tremaine. His pain was forgotten; he would have suffered it twenty times over, to have purchased the rich reward, the voluptuous pleasure of one of these tears.

Evelyn, who knew a burn was a very bad thing for the body, whatever mental consolations attended it, without staying to thank him for saving his dear Georgy, ran out of the room in search of vinegar, with which

ne returned unfortunately too soon for this history to record the soft, tender, and grateful things, which *would have been uttered*, had the Doctor not found the vinegar, before either of the other parties had found their tongues.

Georgina, indeed, could not speak for many minutes; but she looked her thanks in a manner to surpass all the words she could have used—which, indeed, were very few. Evelyn, after ringing for Mrs. Margaret, and being actively employed in directing a bath for Tremaine's hand, said something about the eternal obligation both himself and daughter were under to him. But Tremaine disclaimed all thanks; assuring him, and looking at Georgina with an eye sparkling with pleasure at her safety, that, if his blood instead of his skin had been the price of saving her from danger, he would willingly have shed it.

"I believe you," said Evelyn, "and Georgy does too, only I see she is too much overcome to tell you so."

"In fact, Georgina was making sad work of it, endeavouring with her maid to wrap up one of his hands in a handkerchief steeped in vinegar. But she made so many blunders in tying and untying, that she did no good.

"You had better leave him to Margaret," cried Evelyn.

"I believe so," said Georgina, "and I believe I had better run away, for I am unfit to be here; only if Mr. Tremaine thinks I can ever forget what he has suffered for me ————." 'Twas all she could say: but in her chamber, her heart said a great deal, in that language which the good, the generous, and the sensible alone can speak, or at least understand; that language which, when it proceeds from virtuous feeling, and not mere weakness, is the favourite one of heaven; in short, "tears such as angels weep," came to the relief of the oppressed Georgina.

Even Mrs. Winter could not blame those tears, though they occasioned some little alarm to her present views. For that prudent person, who—though not a Demoivres, knew how to calculate chances in life—was fearful that

Tremaine's wounded hand would certainly be preferred to the sound one of Lord St. Clair, if both were offered; and as she knew there could be no chance of presiding at Woodington, while on the other hand all Mount St. Clair was open before her, her sympathies for the accident that had befallen Tremaine were by no means so pure and unmixed as those of her mistress.

When therefore she followed Georgina to her chamber, and found her in an arm-chair, melted in tenderness, she began with, "La! Ma'am, I wonder how you can take on so for a little burn, or a scald. The squire says himself it is just nothing at all; and I'm sure it is nothing but what any one would have done for you, let alone the squire, who is so much obliged to master and you, for keeping him from moping himself to death."

Georgina, who was in no humour to encourage this, made no direct reply; but after a pause, and as if in soliloquy with herself, rather than talking to her maid, exclaimed, "I know not who else would have done this for me but my father."

"But I do," cried Mrs. Margaret, as if invited to give her opinion. "There is not a servant in the house who would not have done it for so good a lady; but if you must have gentlefolks to be burned for you, I think I know one, not far off, who would give his crownet and his estate into the bargain, though perhaps not so large as Squire Tremaine's——"

"Winter," interrupted Georgina, with unfeigned surprise, "what can you be talking about?"

"Why, what to be sure," returned Margaret, "but what everybody is talking about——— My lord at the Mount there, who is quite as handsome, and much younger, (indeed I thinks the squire grows older and older every day,) and would be scalded to death in every bone of his skin to save your little finger.

"My lord too," continued the dame, finding that her mistress did not interrupt her, "though so young, goes regularly to church——that is, when he is in the country; and both Mr. Martin and Mrs. Devil—(to be sure I always thought that the oddest name for a lady's woman

that ever I did hear)—Well, ma'am, they say my lord is the most generous, politest, dutifulest son that ever was, and so civil to Mr. Trip, though he is only a poor vicar, not at all like my master, you know ma'am, that he is always riding with him when down—a sure proof that he has a great regard for the church."

"Margaret," said Georgina, whose thoughts could stray no longer, "what can all this mean?"

"Mean!" cried Margaret, "ah! to be sure your ladyship knows better than me."

"I protest I do not," answered Georgina.

"What la! ma'am," continued the maid, "it is the talk of all the two parishes, and others too, for what I know."

"What? what, my good woman?" asked her mistress, rising to return down stairs.

"Why that your ladyship is to be lady St. Clair, and my lord you know came last night."

"And is this all?" said Georgina coldly. It had the effect however of making her resume her chair; and seeing that her maid had finished the little business that brought her up stairs, she desired her to leave her, and acquaint her father, and Mr. Tremaine, if he asked, that she was much better.

Georgina, left to herself, could not help pondering what she had just heard. Can it be, said she, that this foolish report is revived? for she knew her name had been coupled some time before with that of St. Clair. Or is there really anything more meant in Lady St. Clair's letter than meets the eye? At these words she took from her cabinet the letter she had lately received from her kinswoman, part of which was as follows:

"You know St. Clair is soon coming. His amiable attentions to me are the comfort of my age, and denote a goodness of heart seldom now seen among young men of his quality. What an admirable husband he would make, and what would I not give to see him settled with some amiable girl like yourself, leading a life so much to his taste as this place would afford! I want, indeed, to tell you a secret about this."

It concluded with announcing an intention to give a *fête* on his arrival, and a request to "her pretty Georgina" to come and assist in the planning of it.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Georgina, and tore the letter to pieces. Yet could she not prevent herself from thinking of Margaret's intimations; in doing which, with all her absorption in regard to another, and all her conviction that St. Clair could never succeed, were he even to court her, if any one imagine she did any thing that the very best girl of twenty in all the world would not have done,—why he and I have read nature in different books.

Recovered from the perturbations of the morning, she was about to rejoin her father and his guest, when she beheld them in the closest conference in the broad walk, that led to the rookery fronting her window. Tremaine's hand by Evelyn's advice was in a sling, and it touched Georgina to the heart to see it. What a moment for the Viscount to open the siege he meditated! Yet so fortune contrived it, and so we are bound to relate it.

CHAPTER XIV.

A YOUNG NOBLEMAN OF GREAT PROMISE.

The excellent foppery of the world.
SHAKSPEARE.

Lord Viscount St. Clair had been bred at Eton. and afterwards at Cambridge. At the first of these he learned to construe most of the odes of Horace; at the last he took an honorary degree. He afterwards travelled into Greece and Italy, with a gentleman, whose expenses he paid, and who published his tour in a thick quarto, in which my lord's name was mentioned not less than seven or eight times. On his return, he began to collect a library, and filled a large room with curious editions, and

specimens of the antique from Athens. Being of an active disposition, he had not time to cultivate his literary taste, but made up for it by a very laborious attention to politics, and for the first three months of his first session in the House of Commons never missed a division,—in which he voted always with the ministry, and was more than once appointed a teller. Emboldened by this success, he the next session volunteered moving the address; but being of very independent principles, and moreover having been rather impertinently rallied by his companions at the clubs in St. James's Street (to all of which he belonged,) on his devotion to the court, he the very next day voted against his friends, to show his independence, and continued to do so ever afterwards.

All this created for him considerable reputation; and his table, for the rest of that session, was covered with political pamphlets, many of them "from the author."

There is no saying to what this career might not have led: but his father dying, and having acquired a taste for architecture in his travels, he pulled down the Gothic mansion of St. Clair, and built up a handsome Italian villa in its stead. During this time, he made a collection of all the books upon architecture that had been published for the last hundred years, most of the plates of which he actually inspected. He also betook himself to planting, and understood Bishop Watson's calculation on the value of larches perfectly well.

It is seldom that a person dedicated to ambition, literature, and the arts, embraces amusements requiring violent personal exertion; but being of a very versatile genius, Lord St. Clair became a member of the Leicestershire hunt, and at length (having entered several horses at Newmarket) of the Jockey club.

Still there was wanting something to the universality of his reputation; and a nobleman of celebrity having just then broke with her, he formed a "*liaison*," rather "*dangéreuse*," with a certain Pauline, who was at that time at the pinnacle of fashion. This giving his mother some uneasiness, to whom he was always particularly

dutiful, (visiting her and his new house the first of every September,) he had the greatness and piety to give up his mistress, at a considerable expense, indeed, though after a calculation which only did honour to his skill both in figures and self-knowledge. By the first of these he found he could get rid of the lady for little more than one year's purchase; by the last, that it had been some time since he had cared a farthing about her. But this being accidental, and at any rate not known to all the world, did not at all diminish his character as an excellent son.

All this made him, as was natural, a very considerable person; and being now eight-and-twenty, and blessed with a suitable fortune, everybody had begun to speculate upon the lady he would marry. Nay, there were many bets upon it at White's. Some of these pointed at the family of a noble peer, high in office, merely because our Viscount was in opposition: an anomaly which has, in fact, much to the credit of our liberality of manners, become exceedingly in fashion. Others, again, propounded an opinion that he had either too much impetuosity, or too much indifference, to be within any speculation at all as to marriage; and that, if he married, he would *commit* matrimony, as he had everything else.

Such was St. Clair. If Georgina should marry him now, after all!

CHAPTER XV.

IN WHICH THE AUTHOR GETS CONFUSED.

> There is such confusion in my powers.
> How much a man's a fool when he
> Dedicates his behaviours to love.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

And why should Georgina not marry the Viscount? We have said he had a good person; nay, he was handsome, and with that thorough look of gentlemanly

nonchalance, which, like the fine breeding of the Somersets, must be born with a man, and is not to be acquired. Let no one from this imagine that *nonchalance* and fine breeding are the same things. They are as different as French from Italian music, or as radicalism from patriotism.

Still, why should she not? He was young as well as handsome; had a fortune unimpaired, and, according to the maxims of the world, had absolutely no vice. To be sure he was said to have been refused by a certain Lady Eleanor Glentworth, the daughter, as was hinted, of one of the ministers. But I never could make that out; and besides, having gone (without knowing why, except that he was laughed at,) headlong into opposition, the offer, if made, was thought to have been only with a view to return to his old political connexion, and no one could suspect this with Miss Evelyn.

Then why should she not accept him?—But Lord bless me! the offer has not yet been made. It is strange how I hurry things; though, perhaps, for this once, not much; for, with whatever intention, here he is at this moment, ringing at Evelyn's gate with all his might.

His entrance was announced to Georgina by the faithful Margaret, while a footman set out in quest of her father, who was walking with Tremaine among the rooks, and engaged with that gentleman in a pointed conversation about this identical peer. Georgina was thinking of him above stairs, and Mrs. Margaret below. The deuse is in it, if I have not disposed things with all possible concomitant interests to give importance to his visit, whatever might be its object.

That object was, in effect, the most solemn and important that a human being could propose to himself in life. It was neither more nor less than to offer his hand to Miss Evelyn, either through her father, or to herself at once, as opportunity might arise.

Now, what a charming chapter might be written upon this subject! for how many thousand ways are there, all of them equally interesting, in which this great question may be propounded, and in how many corresponding thousand ways may it not be received!

It may be done sitting, standing, or singing, laughing or crying, walking, in a carriage, or on horseback, in a drawing-room, or at a ball, (this last very frequent and efficacious,) or at a dinner, or in the open air. I remember it once in a shower of rain, in which the lover having seized his mistress's hand, she had no alternative but to accept him, or get wet through. She chose the first. This was a dangerous experiment, because the shower might have extinguished the flame on both sides.

I have known it in writing, by innuendo, in a copy of verses, which might be taken or not, as the parties pleased. This mode is most convenient, because, if you are refused, you may swear you meant nothing; for poetry is fiction, and the lady gets only the imputation of vanity for her pains.

Then, again, it may be done boldly, or sheepishly. The last seldom succeeds, except there has been a previous tuition by the mamma, who thinks the offer a good one.

There is your confident manner (often good); your tender manner (sometimes better); or your careless, indifferent manner: (this last very doubtful, except the lady is very much bent upon it herself, and then any manner will do).

Now what was Lord St. Clair's manner?

But I must really adopt a slower method, or I shall never get through my facts: for I have two lovers on my hands at the same time; and while St. Clair is offering in the drawing-room, Tremaine is offering in the rookery; and Georgina's doubts and hesitations, and her father's arguments, and old Lady St. Clair's representations, and dame Margaret's persuasions, thicken so fast upon me, that like Lawyer Dowling, I may assert, that if I could cut myself into twenty pieces, I could at this instant find employment for them all.

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW TO MAKE AN OFFER.

What folly I commit I dedicate to you.
SHAKSPEARE.

A FEW pages back we left Lord St. Clair ringing at the gate of Evelyn Hall. Now whether from the agitations of the morning about Tremaine, or the hints in old Lady St. Clair's letter, or the more than hints of her waiting woman, certain it is, that Georgina was quite in a tremor when she heard she had been asked for by this distinguished person.

"We shall now see who is shilly shally," said dame Margaret, as her mistress left her to go down stairs.

The Viscount to do him justice, was very much at his ease, and succeeded in making Georgina feel so too. The weather, Newmarket, a fête at Carlton House, and a fancy ball at the Opera House, were talked of with as much volubility, intermixed with *bons mots* of Beaumont, as if he had come with no design to talk of anything else. This greatly relieved Georgina, who began to laugh at herself for her own suspicions; when, after about twenty minutes' conversation, the servant, who had gone in quest of her father, returning with an account, that he absolutely could not find him, the Viscount got up to take his leave, and while Georgina was standing to do the honours, with exactly the same manner, voice, and countenance in which he had been entertaining her, only as if he had suddenly recollected something of importance, he observed to her, "By the way, my dear Miss Evelyn, my mother wishes sadly to see you upon an affair of consequence, in which my own happiness is materially concerned; and as she cannot come to you, may I have the honour to think you will have the goodness to call upon her in your next ride?"

Georgina assured him she had always great pleasure in calling upon Lady St. Clair. "I suppose," said she,

" it is to talk about the fête she announced in a letter I lately received from her?"

" Something more than that, I assure you," returned the Viscount; " something, in truth, that has brought me all the way from London; and I have told you," added he, with easy confidence, and squeezing her hand, which he had touched as if in taking leave, " my own happiness or unhappiness is most materially concerned in it."

If this were an offer, as it was the first, beautiful as she was, that Georgina had ever received, no wonder she did not understand it. Had it been more explicit, she would have known how to answer. As it was, it was at least ambiguous; and being so little practised in acquired manners, (particularly dandy manners,) we must not be surprised if she coloured, felt awkward, and knew not what to say.

My lord, whose ease never left him, was delighted. He attributed it to the dazzling nature of the intimation he had made; thought it the best proof of success; and could almost have expressed a rapture on the occasion, but that the effort of feigning what one does not feel, is too much for real dandyism to undertake. He therefore contented himself with saying, " I see I have agitated you, which I assure you does me a great deal of honour; but I hope an interview with Lady St. Clair will settle all to your satisfaction; and perhaps you will now thank me for leaving you, only I hope soon to see you again."

At these words he lifted her passive hand, which, in her surprise, and totally unconscious of it, she had allowed him to retain, and pressed it to his lips; then thinking, what was, indeed, true, that he had made a prodigious exertion, he opened the drawing-room door, at which they had been standing all this time, and switching his boots, with a hurried step, till he reached his horses, he rode home, and delighted his mother with an account that he had been accepted.

CHAPTER XVII.

ANOTHER MODE OF MAKING AN OFFER.

The truth you speak doth lack some gentleness,
And time to speak it in. SHAKSPEARE.

It is, I think, high time to return to Tremaine, whom we left with his hand in a sling, walking with his friend to the rookery, in which they were sought, but not found, by Roger, the footman.

Evelyn was for many minutes full of Tremaine's kindness in having saved his dear child's person at the expense of his own.

"I confess," said he, "I should not have liked to have seen poor Georgy so hurt, as she must have been, judging from the pain you have suffered; yet, believe me, I would much rather have been the person to have saved her myself."

"And, believe me," answered Tremaine, "I am more rejoiced than I can tell you, that you were not."

It was not that Tremaine was proud, or vain, or boastful on this occasion. He did not feel an inch taller, nor was his heart inflated in a single vesicle the more for it. He was neither *fier*, *orgueilleux*, nor *glorieux*, nor even *avantageux*, at his good fortune, as a Frenchman would have been. Yet there was an air of happy tenderness about him. No! he would not have parted with the satisfaction of having lamed himself for a considerable time, in saving the most beautiful person in the world, for all that the world could have given him, except that person herself.

Evelyn was not only surprised, but overpowered by the warmth of feeling his friend had just exhibited; so that before he could make any reply, Tremaine had exclaimed, somewhat abruptly—

"She has certainly the most beautiful hand and arm that ever belonged to woman!"

Evelyn did not perceive the concatenation of ideas by which this exclamation had been produced, at a moment when the hand and arm of the lady were not at all in question, but observed—" It is well my daughter does not hear you ; for, though I believe she has as little vanity as is reasonable for her sex, I know no girl of twenty that could stand this."

" Would she were thirty!" said Tremaine, and walked on.

" She is very much obliged to you, and I too," observed Evelyn ; " but ten years are a gift of which I am not now at all ambitious."

" Then I wish I were Lord St. Clair," said Tremaine.

" Nay, now I cannot understand you," answered Evelyn.

" Then, my friend," rejoined Tremaine at once, as if catching at the opportunity—" with all your penetration, your learning, and observation, you are not so read as I thought you in the human heart. Is it possible you do not know that I have long loved your daughter—loved her *to distraction?*"

" How long have you known it yourself?" asked Evelyn.

" I believe ever since I first saw her ; but last night to a certainty, when I was told that St. Clair had proposed to her."

" The secret then is out," observed Evelyn, recollecting Lady St. Clair's letter.

" Good Heaven! he has then proposed to her, and been accepted! Her agitations in the garden this morning—your visit.—Ah! it is all clear to me."

" I wish it were so to me," answered Evelyn ; " but to me it is all darkness, darkness not even visible. I know nothing of St. Clair."

" Nor that he would be accepted if he were to offer?"

" That I cannot pretend to say."

" Good God!" cried Tremaine, " could you not tell whether he would be accepted or refused?"

" As I am not the person to be married," replied Evelyn, " I could not."

"Would you, then, leave it all to your daughter?"

"Most assuredly."

"I am lost!" exclaimed Tremaine.

"It is at least time you should find yourself," returned Evelyn. "But at present, my good and dear friend, you are too much agitated for me to make you out. Let us turn to this walk which leads to your spring. I little thought it could be at any time, still less so soon, the scene of another conversation, if possible more interesting than that of yesterday."

"Yesterday! ah! I shall never forget it!" said Tremaine.

"I trust not," replied his friend, "but our present subject——"

"Is very different; and, alas! as little likely to be satisfactory."

Tremaine then entered at large into his present subject; made the whole confession of his long observation of Georgina's character, his instantaneous admiration of her beauty, the enchantment of her manners, the impression of her virtues—his jealousy, his despair.

Evelyn, with a heart full and eyes glistening, observed he did not understand the adoption of the last two words.

"Why, I am not such a coxcomb to suppose that, with such a disparity of years, I can be thought of at all, much less in comparison with St. Clair, who, whatever you may think, has, I have reason to believe, a serious design to offer to Miss Evelyn."

"I wish," replied his friend, "this interesting matter were half as free from difficulty in other points as it is on the score either of your age, or of Lord St. Clair's pretensions. That a girl does not usually give her affections to a man twenty years older than herself, I grant you; as readily that she may be dazzled by a coronet and a young and handsome fellow. But Miss Evelyn is, perhaps, not of this class of females, and will decide, I imagine, upon higher grounds than either the first or the last—than the last certainly."

" You allow, then," cried Tremaine, in alarm, " that the difference of years may have its natural effect?"

" Can I dispute it, and speak as sincerely as usual?" answered Evelyn. " But, at least, my daughter's tastes are not those of the many. Her education in seclusion and ignorance of the world; her opinion of your accomplishments; her high sense of honour wherever she sees it; not to mention her sensibility to the attentions with which you distinguish her, and the absence of all those attentions from others: all this might give you chances even against our cousin of St. Clair, whose trifling character I should be disappointed if she did not think herself above."

In uttering these words, the Doctor erected his chest, and breathed quicker; for, to say truth, there was but one subject on which he had what may be called pride—his daughter, for whom, in point of mere rank or fortune, no prince on earth he thought could be too good.

The pleasure conceived by Tremaine at this was mixed. He was pleased with the tone in regard to St. Clair; he was not displeased with the tone in regard to himself. Yet not only it seemed there were *difficulties*, not easily to be got over, but some of the ideas broached by the Doctor, as to the seclusion of her life, her ignorance of the world, and the absence of attentions from others, by no means flattered the deep-rooted, and, perhaps, here, not improper pride of our man of refinement.

He walked on for some minutes without reply, during which, ideas of the most important kind crowded so fast upon him, that he could find no tongue to give them utterance.

" Yes," at last he exclaimed, " it is certainly true. Miss Evelyn has seen little of the world: of those societies of which she is formed to be the ornament. There are few, none that can deserve her; and of the few she might not reject, she has not even been where one could be found. If she see them, what chance have I? If she see them not, could I even succeed, to what should I owe my success?"

The Doctor, whose heart and head too were almost as full as his friend's, and who could at first as little find vent for his thoughts, perceived, from his knowledge of Tremaine, what string was now vibrating. It gave him, however, little uneasiness; and he would willingly have compounded for Tremaine's satisfying him upon other points, as well as he (the Doctor) could satisfy Tremaine upon this.

Breaking silence, therefore, on his part, he observed that Tremaine seemed to pay but a poor compliment to his daughter's rank in society, when he supposed her so ignorant. Then, in a lighter tone, he asked—"Has she not seen all Yorkshire? And is there now such a difference between Yorkshire and Grosvenor Square?"

Tremaine looked inquiringly, as if to make out whether he could mean to rally on such a subject.

"Besides," continued he, "has she not seen Grosvenor Square itself at Bellenden House?"

"My friend," said Tremaine, "you are jesting, which I did not expect."

"Less, perhaps, than you imagine," returned Evelyn. "That there must be persons of infinitely more worth than Lord St. Clair and Mr. Beaumont, *et id genus omne*, is, I hope, true; yet you must confess yourself, they are men of the very first *monde*, and would be produced as very fair specimens of the generality of bachelors of fashion. Beaumont is, besides, generally considered as a man of natural abilities; and our cousin there came home from Greece and Florence with the reputation of a young man of the greatest promise. Yet, if that were all, I would bid not only your own heart, but your own pride, which I perfectly well understand, not to be afraid."

"I thank you," replied Tremaine, "for so much comfort as this would give me (and, indeed, it is not a little), that the ten years' advantage which St. Clair has over me could be done away. But all young men are not St. Clairs."

"Still less," returned Evelyn, "are they Tremaines. In many high qualities, as well as accomplishments,

they certainly are not; and, without these, I am mistaken if the freshest bloom of youth could touch my daughter's heart. Would to Heaven everything else were as suitable!"

"You agree, then," said Tremaine, in some agitation, "that this sad disparity——"

"You still speak of disparity of years," observed Evelyn.

"I do. Of what else would you have me speak?"

"Alas!" returned his friend, and pressing the arm that was within his, — "would to Heaven there was no other disparity!"

"What can you possibly mean?"

"I mean all that a good father, or good young woman, must mean, when they are not indifferent to everything beyond this world. I wish there were not such cruel disparities of opinion upon all that can concern the very heart and soul of man—all that can belong to us in this world or the next. With such dissimilitudes, or, rather, such fatal opposition between us as there is on these points, much as we love you, were you prince of the world, I tell you fairly, you would not succeed."

Tremaine was thunderstruck at these words. He had not expected them, had not contemplated their possibility, had not even thought of the case. He breathed thick and frequent; and it was some time before he could recover his voice. His whole hope seemed blasted by what was totally unlooked-for. Indeed, no young person, and no young person's father or mother, that had ever engaged his attention, had ever thought of such a thing. He was confounded, and his eyes swam in a kind of giddiness.

Evelyn pitied him from his heart, and not the less from seeing such a devoted attachment to his daughter, that, could the difficulty be got over, no match that the world could offer would have been half so agreeable to him.

At length, recovering sufficient voice, Tremaine made an effort to ask whether these were Miss Evelyn's sentiments as well as her father's?

" They are," said Evelyn.

" You have then discussed the matter?" observed Tremaine, with some shrewdness.

The Doctor saw all the difficulty of his answer; but between difficulty and truth he never had a choice. He therefore told him very fairly, that he had for some time perceived, if not his attachment, yet at least that he treated and talked of Georgina as he did of no other woman; in short, quite enough to awaken a father's observation.

" Nor will I conceal from you my uneasiness," added he, " when I found I had more and more reason to suspect, in regard to your religious principles, what yesterday was so dreadfully confirmed."

" Say rather my no principles," said Tremaine, with a sigh. " And yet," continued he, while a transient gleam shot across his face, for which I will not pretend to account—" why should this make you uneasy on Miss Evelyn's account?"

" It would be gross affectation, nay, duplicity," replied Evelyn, " to say, I do not understand you. You are welcome, therefore, to such pleasure as it may give you, to learn, that as a father I feared the impressions of those attentions, notwithstanding the disparity which so alarms you."

Tremaine's countenance grew light.

" But in justice to Georgina," continued the Doctor, " I am also bound to say my fears are at an end, for no mischief has been done."

Tremaine's features fell again; and he observed, with some distance in his manner—

" You must have gone far with her to come to this conclusion."

To this Evelyn replied, with prompt firmness—" It was my duty to examine her, and I did so."

The conversation dropped for a few paces, when Tremaine resumed it, by asking, not without some trepidation—

" Am I to understand then, that except for my tenets, as you call them, Miss Evelyn——"

But he could get no farther.

"My dear friend," said his upright companion, "I need not point out to a mind like your's the injustice, the unfairness, of tempting me to give an opinion on this question; an opinion, which to whatever side it leans, must compromise me either with my daughter or my friend, and which, in regard to my daughter, cannot but end in compromising her delicacy."

"Oh! God forbid!" said Tremaine. "'Tis a delicacy on which there never was, and never can be a spot."

"I hope so; nay, I believe so," observed Evelyn; "nor can I do better than to leave it to its own keeping."

"Any way then," said Tremaine, mournfully, "my doom is sealed."

"I have not said so," replied Evelyn. "On the contrary, if it pleased Heaven to enlighten you to a sense of its own truth——"

"What then?" cried Tremaine, catching at these words.

"Why then, my daughter (I mean no more) is open to be woo'd; and need I add a father's wishes that she may be won?"

Tremaine thanked him, but with less warmth of manner than usual, and continued many minutes in silence.

"You are displeased with me," said Evelyn, after a pause.

"I have at least no right to be so," answered Tremaine. "I dare say you have done what every father thinks himself bound to do."

"I have done nothing," said Evelyn.

"Miss Evelyn's feeling is then spontaneous?"

"Most assuredly."

"But upon your representation that I was——May I ask what was the character you gave of me?"

"You are unkind to put it in this way," replied his companion, "for well you know that but for those sad opinions, every feeling, wish, and even prejudice, is in your favour. But with my observation of your attentions, mean they what they might, I could not shrink

from the duty of informing the daughter of my heart, of the wild overthrow of what I think one of the finest of minds, which has led you, while you acknowledge a Creator, to deny his providence, to believe that we perish like the beasts, and to live an unhappy infidel, instead of a reverent Christian."

"Am I all this?" said Tremaine, with emotion.

"You have said it," answered Evelyn, "and believe me it rent my very heart."

"Good friend!" cried Tremaine; "but what if these opinions were renounced, were changed——should I then——"

"You would then be at liberty—that is, the field would be open."

"But with what hope of success?"

"I am not the person to decide."

"Would you bid me despair."

"No."

The conversation again stopped, and Tremaine fell into much thought; when, after some minutes' interval, and assuming a very solemn air, in which there was more formality than he ever yet had shown to his friend, he said, "Doctor Evelyn, hitherto you have answered for your daughter, in a matter on which you allow she alone must judge. Have you any objection to let her answer for herself?"

"None in the world."

"Then, though I perish, I will make the attempt."

A bell, which was sometimes rung when Evelyn was in his grounds and particularly wanted, now began to sound through the little dell formed by the river, on whose banks they were walking; and as the conversation seemed exhausted, Tremaine proceeded to let himself into the walk by the spring, which he had by that time reached; and Evelyn returned to the house.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AN AFFRONT.

Touch me with noble anger.

SHAKSPEARE.

"Does Lord St. Clair then think that my girl is to be had for asking, and for no other reason that I can discover but because he is a lord? I trust he must show far other pretensions, as well as my lady his mother, my affectionate and admiring cousin here, as she calls herself. I imagine he must do something more than merely throw his handkerchief. His conduct is a downright affront. I believe, indeed, he is only a silly fellow, but he must be made to know it."

This last sentence was the last of a series sufficiently angry to exhaust all the anger that Evelyn was master of. He had begun with a letter from Lady St. Clair in one hand, and another from her son in the other—striding in considerable agitation up and down the eating-room as soon as he had read these letters.

It was they that had occasioned his recall from the brook side, by order of Georgina, who had also received a letter to the same import from Lady St. Clair, which she had read in her own chamber, where she now continued.

"Call Miss Evelyn down," said the Doctor, after ringing his bell, and resuming his perambulation of the eating-room. "I protest I know not how to answer these letters."

"You shall answer them for me," continued he to his daughter as she entered, "for you are the party concerned."

Georgina was thinking more of Tremaine than either Lord St. Clair or his mother.

"Is Mr. Tremaine then gone home?" asked she with some anxiety. "I fear his hand and arm are much hurt."

"He is a brave fellow," said the Doctor, "and deserves you, with all his pride, much better than this silly Viscount."

"*Deserves* me!" exclaimed Georgina, laying an emphasis on the word.

"Aye! better than this promising boy, as I remember he was called, though I never thought him so,—and who would still I suppose be a promising boy, but that he has been several years a man."

"My dear father, I know not what you mean by *deserves*."

And yet Georgina knew very well what she wished him to mean.

The Doctor was still in thought, and the poor girl, agitated to the extreme, ventured to begin a question of the utmost importance to her heart.

"Has Mr. Tremaine then ———," said Georgina, but she could get no farther.

"Mr. Tremaine will speak for himself, and put all my Georgy's firmness to the trial."

This speech renewed all the palpitations of the early morning, from which, in truth, what had passed with Lord St. Clair, and the letters just received, had by no means tended to recover her; neither were they at all cured by the warm and encouraging caresses of her father, who embraced and kissed her with fervour, and implored blessings on her head.

"But these letters, my love!" said Evelyn.

Georgina would have much rather talked of Tremaine.

"They seem to say that all is settled between you; though I can scarcely guess that he has been here, much less that he has talked to you on the subject. How such a result as he conceives has ensued, can have been brought about, baffles all my conjectures."

"And mine," said Georgina; "nor am I yet recovered from my astonishment at Lady St. Clair's understanding of it."

"Has he even spoken to you?" asked Evelyn.

"Spoken! yes; but to what purpose I should never

have known, but for this letter, and a strange manner of taking leave of me."

She then recounted nearly all that had passed; which moved the Doctor to risibility rather than to anger; and he perhaps would have laughed aloud, but that this was forbidden by the thought of what awaited Tremaine, and the sight of the first uneasy looks he had ever beheld in his life on the countenance of his sweet Georgy.

As it was, he could not help saying he was sure St. Clair would appeal to the Jockey Club, who would certainly condemn her to fulfil her *engagement*.

"I am most distressed about it," said Georgina, "I never meant ——— I could not even guess —— I was vexed and surprised, nay alarmed at his manner in leaving me; I wanted indeed all my dear father's support."

She then recounted (and coloured violently as she did it,) that he had suddenly kissed her hand, in token, as she now found, that he was accepted.

"Coxcomb! —— or rather poor shallow fellow!" said Evelyn, with some anger; "yet he is the hero of Lady Gertrude's circle, thinks Beaumont a man of first-rate abilities, and is thought by many the ornament of White's."

The Doctor's anger soon evaporated.

"Be at ease, my love," said he, after a pause: "a quarter of an hour's ride, and five minutes' talk, will set all this right. We must expect to be abused, certainly misrepresented:" then seeing his daughter downcast, he told her to cheer up, for those who could abuse her could only be found among the wicked.

Georgina assured him, and her assurance was true, that as long as she possessed his approbation, and her own conscience did not accuse her, the opinion of persons who could not be informed would give her little trouble.

She saw her father then mount his horse, and ride for the second time that day to St. Clair, without much trouble of mind. But though her eye pursued him from her window till he was out of sight, her thoughts were at Woodington.

CHAPTER XIX.

HOW TO BEAR A REFUSAL.

This weak impress of love is as a figure
Trenched in ice, which with an hour's heat
Dissolves to water and doth lose its form.

Being a maid, yet rosied over
With the virgin crimson of modesty.

SHAKSPEARE.

Evelyn, with the decision that belonged to him, saw not only the exact state of what had passed between St. Clair and his daughter, but that every minute was of importance in removing an error, which, if long unremoved, might become highly mischievous. He therefore pushed on, and was luckily at the gate of Villa St. Clair just as its owner in his post-chariot and four was driving out of it to Evelyn Hall. To do my lord justice, the complacency of his features amounted almost to elation, at the sight of what he thought his future father-in-law, coming to convey his daughter's consent and his own joy.

Evelyn, however, as soon as he had dismounted, took him by the arm, and trusting to his superiority in age, having in truth often had him on his knee as a child, hurried him into a private walk, and rushing *in medias res*, told him he was come to clear up some unfortunate mistakes, which he would trust to his candour to forgive.

The Viscount almost actually changed countenance at this intimation.

"I hope, my dear Sir," he exclaimed, "I can't have been misunderstood. I endeavoured to be as explicit as possible."

"Your letters certainly were so," replied Evelyn, "but your interview as certainly not."

"I told Miss Evelyn my happiness or unhappiness was concerned," rejoined the Viscount; "and when a young lady hears that, and does not reply, surely *c'est une affaire arrangée*."

"I am afraid our country manners do not keep pace with yours in town, if that is the way the thing is understood there."

"I can only say," replied the Viscount, "that many a man in town has been called out for not fulfilling words much less explicit."

He said this with even emotion, but whether of love or resentment seemed problematical.

"My dear lord," cried Evelyn, "you are to consider that the object you have thus honoured is a mere country girl; and though not beneath your notice, if I may be permitted to say so, being indeed your kinswoman, and not uneducated or unaccomplished,——"

St. Clair stopped, and seemed to listen with a sort of sullenness, when at length assuming an air of exquisite *hauteur*, keeping his body straight, but bowing his head as low as that position would admit—

"Am I to understand," said he, "that my proposals are declined?"

"What can I say?" returned Evelyn, a little moved on his part. "I have told you I came to explain a mistake; but I trust you will not give me the pain of thinking you offended."

"If Miss Evelyn is indeed such a novice, so totally ignorant of the forms of society, I know not what to say to her behaviour," replied St. Clair; "but surely she cannot have heard of what sacrifices I have made for her—sacrifices which even you, my good Doctor, may probably be surprised at."

"I confess I have not heard of them," said Evelyn.

"Surely you must have heard of my attentions to Lady Gertrude Bellenden, and I can only say that ——," here he hesitated.

"That she accepted you?" asked Evelyn.

"Pretty nearly so, for I had actually made up my mind to offer to her."

"Which you concluded was the same thing?"

"Undoubtedly," answered St. Clair.

"My dear lord," returned Evelyn, "I hope it is not yet too late."

"I trust not," replied the peer, relaxing into carelessness and quickening his pace. "Country ladies I see are strange creatures, and I was wrong to come down on such an errand. But in fact my mother was to blame for it all."

"I am sorry for it," observed Evelyn; then seeing his companion quickening his pace still more, and assuming more and more carelessness, even so as to pick up a pebble, and throw it at some swans in a neighbouring sheet of water:—

"My good lord," cried Evelyn, "I am glad to see this *contretemps* is not of much consequence to you."

"Not the least in the world," replied the Viscount. "I have been misled by my mother; and really to please her as much as myself, resolved to show Miss Evelyn the preference to Lady Gertrude; which, give me leave to tell you," added he, drawing up his fine tall figure, "I thought no common mark of attachment."

"I think so too," observed Evelyn, "and we are proportionably your debtors. But presuming on our old acquaintance, may I ask, was your love for Lady Gertrude exceedingly great?"

"As great as a man usually feels for a proper and eligible wife."

"May I go on to ask, when this love was abandoned?"

"I know not that it ever was abandoned, only I loved Miss Evelyn more, as I think I have proved."

"Believe me, Miss Evelyn will be fully sensible of the obligation she is under to you, but ——"

"But my proposals are declined. No more needs be said; you are the best judges of what alliance will suit you best; and I wish Miss Evelyn a higher and better *parti*."

Had this been said with anything like a feeling of mortification or concern, Evelyn would have been moved at it, and attempted something soothing in reply. But upon looking into the Viscount's face, he could see little there but pride struggling to conceal what he evidently felt as an affront. As to love, much more *wounded* love, there was not a feature of it; and it decided Evelyn to

take his leave, without even an attempt to conciliate him. They returned therefore to the house, where Evelyn's horse was still waiting, which mounting, the Viscount took leave of him with the very stiffest condescension, and instantly getting into the carriage which had also been waiting, threw himself into a corner of it, after ordering it, in Evelyn's hearing, to drive to Bellenden House.

CHAPTER XX.

A PREPARATION.

> If that thy bent of love be honourable,
> Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

"You will not have the sin of murder on your head," continued he to Georgina, after he had told her what had passed. "He bears the willow gallantly. How can I pity you enough for refusing a coronet and such devoted affection at the same time?"

"I never had a thought of the one or the other," said Georgina.

"Lady Gertrude will think differently," observed her father.

"I shall be glad if she does, for they seem to be more suited to each other than I should have been to him, or Lady Gertrude to ——," a sigh stopt what she was going to say.

Evelyn looked at her, and soon perceived whereabouts she was. She had by no means recovered the events of the morning.

A more critical, and indeed more painful task now awaited him, and poor Georgina was destined to hear of a conversation of far more consequence to her peace. Evelyn offered to defer it till the next day, and at any

rate proposed to her to take time to rally her scattered spirits. But she begged him to proceed then.

"Suspense, I think," said Georgina, "will only make me worse."

The Doctor thought so too, and sitting down by her on her own sofa, (for it was in her little dressing-room he had sought her when he returned from St. Clair,) he took her hand, and with many a caress, suited to the support which he saw she wanted, communicated to her the whole substance of what had passed with Tremaine. To his astonishment he found that it did not give that affliction to Georgina's feelings which he had expected. The Doctor was indeed rather past the age of love. He was too acute, however, not to perceive at once the reason for that absence of sorrow, if I may not rather say that accession of pleasure, which the first part of his communication threw over the whole countenance of his daughter. She at first indeed looked down upon the hand that was fast grasped in hers, while he was speaking; her bosom heaved with agitation, she blushed "celestial rosy red:" and I question if the angel to whom those charming words were applied, could have looked more beautiful or more happy. At length, as her father went on, a dimpled smile of ineffable sweetness lit up her lovely features, and she hid her face on Evelyn's shoulder, as if she would have concealed her emotion even from herself. Then in a hesitating voice, in which however a man of much less penetration than her parent could have discerned that there was as much of pleasure as of any other feeling, she exclaimed,

"Oh! my dear father, at least then he loves me!"

Poor Evelyn, whose heart was sustaining a conflict from other thoughts, had not calculated upon this first impression. He had only looked to the concern that would be occasioned by the principles of Tremaine; and he felt startled, and not too happy at seeing his daughter so moved. But the Doctor, as I have said, was past the age of love.

"True, my dearest girl," returned he; "nor will I conceal either from you or myself the pleasure of thinking

that in this our friend's feelings are consistent with his conduct; that he has not attempted to trifle either with you or with me."

"He never could," observed Georgina, in a low voice.

"His honour is like pure gold," continued Evelyn, "nor do I believe there is the smallest sophistication in his feelings. He loves you, in short, as I would wish you to be beloved. But ——"

"Alas! my dearest father," replied Georgina, changing from all her happiness. "I know what that *but* would mean—his principles are insuperable, and the gate for ever closed—none but the Almighty can open it:" and she gave a sigh that seemed to shake her very heart.

"What if you could do it yourself?" said Evelyn: "he means to seek you."

"To seek me?"

"Yes! he asked if you thought as I did, and I told him yes."

"You did right," said Georgina, mournfully. "But why then seek me?"

"He thought he had a right to be answered from your own lips, and I could not but allow it."

"My dearest father, you are always most just—but believe me this interview will be painful."

The entrance of Margaret with a note to her master, interrupted this conversation. It was from Tremaine, requesting permission, at her own time, to wait upon his daughter. If ever the warm fancy, that "the body thinks," seemed as if it could be realised, it was at that moment in the person of the lovely Georgina. The blush of agitating interests struck her father almost as much as it would Tremaine himself, had he been present; nor are we positive that this lovely blush, indicating so many contending feelings, was absolutely without the expression of pleasure: for say what we will, the impression of being beloved where we wish to be so, will throw a ray of gold over the darkest disappointment, and mingle sweetness with a draught as bitter as gall.

God help thee, Georgina! thou never wert made to taste of gall; nor willingly shouldst thou be nourished

with anything but the nectar of heaven. And oh! that heaven in its mercy keep far from that dear and innocent heart the storm of affliction, with which in its wisdom it sometimes tries the purest of its favourites!

"And what shall I say to him, my girl?" asked Evelyn.

"Advise me," said Georgina.

"I think to-morrow," returned her father, "to-morrow will be the best time. You have to-day had too many agitations of different kinds not to stand in need of repose. You will have time to recollect and compose yourself, for what will I know be a trial to you."

"To-morrow let it be," said Georgina.

Evelyn then left her, to answer Tremaine's note; and Georgina, locking her chamber door, fell upon her knees in a recess of the room, and poured forth her heart to a higher friend, protector, and guide, than even the one who had just quitted her She implored to be enlightened and strengthened; to be led into the right path, and kept in it; and she rose with half the benefit already conferred, from the mere act of having asked it.

CHAPTER XXI.

VERY WARM.

All made of passion, and all made of wishes,
All adoration, duty, and observance,
All humbleness, all patience, and impatience,
All purity, all trial.

SHAKSPEARE.

Evelyn had asked Tremaine to breakfast, preliminarily to the interview he had sought with his daughter; and the fluttering heart of Georgina had to sustain both agitation, disappointment, and relief, when, after a loud ringing at the gate, not Tremaine but her friend Careless entered the room.

Perhaps it was the only time in her life when she was not glad to see him; and yet, for the moment, a sensation of relief accompanied his approach.

"Did you expect me?" said Careless, eyeing the breakfast things, and seeing three covers. "If you did, you must have had the second sight, for I did not know myself I was coming here till five minutes ago."

"And what has produced us the sudden honour?" asked Evelyn.

"Why, to find out truth, if I can, among a pack of lies," said Jack, taking a chair;——"but I see nothing but plates and cups," added he, getting up again: "where the devil is the cold beef? and who have you coming?"

"Mr. Tremaine breakfasts here," said Evelyn.

"He is always here, I think," cried Jack. "Well, so much the better for him," and he looked slily at Georgina. "And now I think of it, it is vast convenient, for a good many of the lies, or the truth, or both, mayhap, are about him."

The new custom of Georgina's cheeks here found plenty of employment; and Careless, whom she had been used to set upon and mislead in very sport, just as she pleased, now, for the first time in her life, seemed a redoubtable being to her.

"Let us hear your gossip before he arrives," said Evelyn.

"You shall," answered Careless; "but now I think on't, it is not much about him; but, as old Qui Tam would say, only collateral."

Georgina felt greatly relieved.

"Then who is your principal?" cried Evelyn.

"You: and that's the reason I came; and yet not so much you, as you," and he looked again at Georgina.

The poor girl was again as red as scarlet; but Jack, again correcting himself, exclaimed, "after all, it is most about your kinsman St. Clair."

"Proceed," said the Doctor, with some impatience.

"Why, they say (but them bucks never know their own minds,) that he came down on purpose to run away with Georgy, for which, if she had been base enough to leave Yorkshire, I would have cut her off with a shilling. Nay,

but the old woman, his mother, said so herself, to the old Swish, who tucks her up of a night, and worms everything out of her; and she told it to some one who told it...."

"To your Becky," interrupted the Doctor.

"Just so," said Jack, who was, however, a little disconcerted; for of all things he was jealous of Becky's authority, from which he derived a great deal of the family histories of the neighbourhood, which he was fond of relating, but to which Evelyn seldom submitted without a severe cross-examination; and this had so often demolished her intelligence, that the authority itself, together with Jack's pleasure in it, had frequently tottered. Hence, whenever he was pushed to vouch Becky as his informant, particularly by Evelyn, he became immediately nervous for the fate of all he was about to bring forward.

At present, events of the greatest possible importance in Jack's world depended upon it; and he seemed by this simple observation of Evelyn to be called upon, not merely to narrate and put together, in the most conspicuous order, a story rather long and complex in its parts, but to sustain and demonstrate the whole character of his housekeeper, for accuracy and authority; which character, as has been observed, was in this house at least a little doubtful.

"Just so," said Jack, "but give me leave to tell you, whatever you may think, Becky is oft'ner right than wrong."

"Well, what does she say now?" asked Evelyn.

"It is a long story," replied Careless, "but the upshot is, that this sprig of a lord had been a dangling the whole winter long after Lady Gertrude, but Lady Gertrude was dying for love of Mounseer Melancholy; that the Mounseer did not know his own mind, no more than my lord, but if he had been young enough, wanted certainly to come a courting to you, Georgy. So, to be beforehand with him, my lord resolved to come a courting too, and this he thought would get you from the 'squire, and spite Lady Gertrude at the same time."

"All very well contrived," observed Evelyn, "and very righteously resolved."

"So you will say," pursued Careless, "for the short and the long of it was, that as soon as Lady Gertrude heard this, she went raving mad with jealousy, and sent over to the peer to recal him, and it is all settled that they are to be married directly.

"Not unlikely," said Evelyn, "but by what I see, Georgy's share in this story is that she is only to be cheated out of a husband."

"Why that's the puzzle," replied Jack, "that I want to have cleared up; for you must know I was told you were at the bottom of it all; you were consulted throughout; my lord would not stir a step without you; and he was here once, and you twice at St. Clair, yesterday, and afterwards he set off like smoke for Bellenden House, where it was all settled last night; and this last, mind, I did not hear from Becky, so perhaps you will believe it."

"And whom did you hear it from?" asked Evelyn.

"My brother," answered Jack, "who is now at Lord Bellenden's, and was told it last night by St. Clair himself; and as he was just sending off a haunch of venison by the coach to the Hound and Horn club at Belford, he sent me this here note along with it."

Jack here, with some triumph, produced his credentials, and as he gave the note to Evelyn to read, concluded with saying,

"And now, I think, you will not question Becky's news another time."

The note was perfectly explicit, and added, in terms, that as Lord St. Clair by no means meant the event to be a secret, Careless was at liberty to mention it to the club, or anywhere else he pleased, and as soon as he pleased.

Evelyn at once saw through the design of this, of which the senior Careless was thus the instrument. It was evident that St. Clair wished, as soon as possible, that it should reach himself and his daughter, in order to show them of how very little consequence their refusal had been.

"These men of the first *monde*," said the Doctor, putting the note into Georgina's hand, "are surely a

different race from all the rest of human kind, in all they think, say, and do."

"All further discussion was now interrupted by the arrival of Tremaine, who bit his lip at seeing Jack there; but, upon the whole, trusting to a speedy opportunity of detaching him away, and the whole party loving him as a thoroughly attached friend, they were, perhaps, as well satisfied that, during the mere breakfasting, their consciousness should be a little diverted from itself by such a companion.

It was impossible, however, for the recent intelligence to escape mention during breakfast, and it cost Tremaine, at first, no inconsiderable alarm. He had remarked that Georgina received him with a look peculiarly conscious and downcast, nay, abashed; and before he could well draw her out into the common tea-table discourse, he was abruptly saluted, by Jack's asking, with an almost wink at his companions,

"Have you heard of the new Lady St. Clair? My lord offered, and was accepted yesterday, and all the bells of Belford will be set ringing as soon as I can get there."

Tremaine, who had not yet obtained the use of his wounded hand, was very near breaking another of the Doctor's china cups, or at least overturning it into Georgina's lap, at this sudden question, which brought all the blood into his cheeks. It was evident he had heard nothing of Jack's intelligence.

Looking at his friends for information, he was surprised, and perhaps not quieted, at hearing from Evelyn that it was all perfectly true. What would have been the consequence might not have been calculated, had not the Doctor, seeing his emotion, put Jack's note into his hands, saying—

"Notre chancelier vous dira le reste."

"This is most surprising," exclaimed Tremaine.

"I don't know why," said Careless, "for both the man and the girl have been a long time longing to be married. Where's the wonder they should come together?"

"True," said Tremaine, and the breakfast went on.

When it was finished, Jack fairly spared Evelyn all contrivance to get rid of him; for scarcely had they risen from the table, before he said he must leave them to put his threats into execution, of setting the bells of Belford a ringing.

"Happy mortal!" exclaimed Tremaine, pursuing him with his eye, and sighing as he spoke:—"careless in nature as in name. I believe, after all, it would puzzle the best of our philosophers to equal him."

"We will therefore let him alone," said Evelyn, "and wish there were more like him in the world."

At these words the good Doctor fairly left the room.

Alone with Georgina, at his own desire, and by her consent, as well as her father's, what was now the situation of Tremaine! The crisis of his life seemed approaching; ten thousand feelings, notions, ideas, seemed pulling him different ways, and crowded so fast upon him, that everything he had brooded over for the last two days seemed blended into one vague mass of indistinctness. Never was man at the moment so little fitted for the undertaking which yet he had voluntary courted.

I suppose every man thinks so when first about to address the object of his love. But how different was Tremaine's from the usual situations of this sort! He was not merely ignorant of the state of her heart towards him; it was her mind, her principles, her scruples, he had to sound; he was to ascertain, not merely whether she loved him, but whether she would even allow him to ask that question.

Georgina, on her part, was scarcely in less difficulty. In agitation, she was even worse; for which, indeed, her natural modesty might account; for, surely, in this she was the purest creature on earth. She had indeed one advantage over him. She knew that he loved her, and had professed to do so, while he was ignorant of *her* sentiments. But she knew also that she loved him, and that the affection he was about to proffer, which might have been the joy and blessing of her heart, she herself would be forced to reject, nay, to pray might be extinguished.

Never were two people who loved, or did *not* love one another so disconcerted at being left alone together as Tremaine and Georgina.

Her father's quitting the room seemed to plunge her into a difficulty, from which she could only be relieved by quitting it too; and this, perhaps, she would actually have done, had not Tremaine gathered courage to seat himself close by her; and seizing her hand with that one of his which was free, began the conversation he had so long meditated.

"My dearest Georgina," said he,—"suffer me so to call you, even though it may be for the last time. Would to God I might add to it, my own Georgina."

Georgina left her passive hand in his.

"Your excellent father has, I believe, related to you the conversation I had with him in that eventful morning of yesterday."

"It was indeed eventful," said Georgina, looking at his wounded hand; "and you must have thought me shamefully ungrateful, not even yet to have inquired after the hand that so kindly saved me."

"Alas!" answered Tremaine, "I thought not of that when I called the morning eventful. I was more selfish. I referred to what was of far more consequence than this trifling accident. I alluded to my heart's best secret; which, however conscious of it, I believe nothing would have torn from me, but the fear (groundless as it has turned out) of a younger and more suitable competitor for Miss Evelyn's favour; for, believe me, I thought that favour a treasure far too rich for *me*."

Georgina felt these words in her very heart, over which they shed a sweetness that was delicious, spite of all the disappointment which she feared might await her. It was perhaps this very sweetness that deprived her of the ability either of answering or of withdrawing the hand which still remained in the possession of Tremaine: resting the other, therefore, on the back of her chair, she leaned her cheek upon it, and covered her eyes with its pretty fingers. She thus seemed all ear, and waited for him to go on.

"It is most true," continued he, "that, when I surveyed your lovely beauty, joined to a goodness and good sense, an innocency as well as elegance of mind such as I never saw equalled, I thought you would be the last, best gift of Heaven to him who might eventually gain you. To win, to obtain so invaluable a blessing, was the difficulty; and when I considered myself—I despaired."

He paused; and Georgina could answer nothing with her lips: but a slight, involuntary, and momentary, but still perceptible return to the pressure of his hand, seemed to ask him why he despaired.

"In many things," pursued he, "I thought we were alike—in many I wished, and in some I hoped we might be so. You opened my eyes, even more than your father, to my defects; and my days, from having been a burthen to me, ran on with a sweetness, a lightness, such as I never knew till I knew you."

Georgina was more and more penetrated.

"My proximity to you," continued he, "on all occasions, left me no doubt to what this was owing; and my heart daily and momentarily felt that you alone were the cause of it."

Georgina whispered rather than said, he was a great deal too good; but, affected by all this avowal of his admiration and his tenderness, a tear trickled through the fingers that still covered her eyes, which, devouring her as he did with his, he could not fail to perceive.

His heart dilated with joy; and a delicious hope, which can be imagined only by those who have felt it, seemed to take possession of him, spite of all Evelyn's prognostics.

"Yes," continued he, "I could have no doubt who and what was the sweet anodyne to the canker which consumed me,—out of humour with myself, with mankind, and particularly, I fear, with womankind, until my sweet and lovely neighbour redeemed the whole sex by convincing me I was wrong. How deeply (suspecting no danger or disappointment where I knew not at first that I had presumed to form a hope) how deeply did I drink of this comfort, till my senses were overcome;

and I have waked only to a greater and more lasting misery than before."

"Oh! Mr. Tremaine," said Georgina, now finding her voice, "why all this?—what can your meaning be?"

She stopped; and he instantly replied, "My meaning is, Georgina, that I cannot be the coxcomb to presume, that, with such disparity of years between us, the friend and school companion of your father, I could ever obtain more than your esteem. To inspire you with those sentiments, that warmth and eagerness of affection, which yet I should be fool enough to look for in the person I sought for my heart's companion—to do this, I should despair."

"Oh! if that were all!" exclaimed Georgina, while a stifled sigh, amounting even to sobbing, prevented her from going on.

"In my turn, my dear Georgina," said Tremaine, "let me ask what can your meaning be?"

"Alas!" answered Georgina, gathering strength and fortitude to proceed with her purpose, "how little would the disparity you talk of be, in my eyes, if there were no other cruel disagreement between us!"

"I will not affect to misunderstand you," replied Tremaine, "for I have gathered all from your father; but tell me, sweet girl, is it possible I have heard aright, and from your own lips—is it possible, (I beseech you to bless me again with the assurance, if true,) is it possible that I could really aspire to your love, were all these disagreements, which you call so cruel, removed?"

Georgina immediately became again abashed, and, returning to her former position, only covering her face still more with her hand, she asked, in a hesitating, subdued voice, "Does my present behaviour show that Mr. Tremaine's attentions can be unwelcome to me?"

Tremaine's whole frame became, at these words, inflated with a joy which his life had never known. He raised her hand to his lips, and was very near throwing himself at her feet, when he exclaimed,

"Then all my soul has desired is accomplished, for all other difficulties are as nothing."

"Stop," said Georgina, assuming all her decision, and disengaging herself from his arms; "we must not go on thus. Would to Heaven the difficulties you speak of were really nothing! But my father has told you, and I confirm every word he has said, that, if the tenderness you have avowed to me were even more dear to me than I own it is, it would be impossible to gratify your wishes, or my own, while you think of the most sacred, most awful things, as I fear you do."

"What," asked Tremaine, mournfully, "has your father represented of my opinions?"

"Alas! I fear he is too accurate to have misunderstood, and is too just to misrepresent them: and we lament, if I may presume to join myself with him on such an occasion, what he calls the ruin, as to sacred things, of a mind too noble in everything else not to inspire every one with the sincerest esteem."

"Has he, then, related no particulars?"

"Oh! yes! but, I beseech you, spare the sorrowful account. To think that you own no providence, no care of the Almighty here, and, still less, hereafter, fills me with terror only to be equalled by the grief of thinking that it is you who do this."

Her agitation, from mingled sorrow and tenderness, here became extreme.

Tremaine was infinitely moved; his love was only more and more excited, and, had he not been probity itself, he was ready to have fallen at her feet, and confessed himself as to religion, of any creed she would be pleased to prescribe.

But he *was* probity itself, and so wholly the reverse of hypocrisy, that, to have gained the world's treasure, in this love-inspiring girl, he would not have assumed it for a moment.

"Oh! sweet and admirable girl," he exclaimed, "sweet as thy youth, and admirable as thy beauty, how shall I answer you so as to appease your distress, and yet preserve my own character with you for the honour you allow me? How can I show you the frankness you deserve, when, by doing so, I probably destroy my hope

of you for ever? Have you really considered this matter? is your resolution fixed? is it the spontaneous act of your deliberate mind? or is it your father's counsel that sways you, not your own?"

"Oh my own, my own," replied Georgina—"for were it even possible, (which it is not,) for my father to have counselled me differently, such is my horror—oh! excuse me such a word—alas! that ever I should apply it to one who———," her emotions prevented her from finishing.

"Am I, then, an object of horror to you, Georgina?"

"The Almighty knows my wretchedness in using the word," returned Georgina: "I would say rather my terror, my grief—but, whatever it be, it is so strong, lest the guide of my mind, as well as the master of my heart, should lead me into such errors, that, were my affection fixed beyond all power to move it, I should dread, and would refuse to gratify it."

"Noble girl!" cried Tremaine; "but surely reasonable as noble; and if so, will you not hear me?"

"Oh gladly yes! if you will confess we are mistaken."

Tremaine was severely pushed in his turn. His heart's best hope hung on the answer he might choose to give to this one question. But his truth prevailed. Recovering, therefore, from the struggle, he contented himself with saying, "of this we will talk farther; at present, I only wish to observe upon your fear that I should lead you into such errors. Whatever my opinions, (and I really know not that I have been correctly represented,) think not I would attempt to mislead you, or lead you at all. If, therefore, the most perfect freedom in your sentiments, uninfluenced by me; if the most solemn promise to abstain from even the assertion of my own in your presence; in short, a sacred compact that the very subject shall not even be mentioned between us; if this can ensure your peace, and deliver you from your fears, by the honour you are so kind as to ascribe to me, I swear to adhere to such a promise in all the amplitude you can possibly prescribe. One exception, indeed, I might possibly ask of my Georgina,

and that is, that I might be myself her pupil, until her innocent nature had so purified mine, as at least to leave no hindrance from prejudice to my arriving at truth. Lastly, should I really be thus blest, and should our union increase the number of those interested, I would leave them all to the direction and tutorage of him in whom my Georgina would most confide—that excellent and pious man from whom she herself derives her principles, as her birth."

A proposal so congenial to her every feeling, so agreeable to her wishes, so soothing to her fears, so flattering to her hopes, so encouraging to all her prepossessions, made the most vivid and visible impression upon her firmness. It staggered much of her resolution, and had well nigh overpowered her whole purpose at once. Nor would, perhaps, the most virtuous, the most pious, have blamed, or, at least, refused to have excused her, had she yielded to terms so delightful to her heart.

"Oh! Mr. Tremaine," she replied, in a hesitating, irresolute, but, at the same time, the softest voice in the world, "do not thus use your power over the heart whose secret you have surprised. Tempt not, I implore you, the affection I have owned, and never will deny. Rather assert the generosity that belongs to you, that distinguishes you, I should say, from all other men whatever, and assist a poor weak creature, struggling to do what is right; assist her against herself!"

"Ah! dearest Georgina," replied Tremaine, "what an appeal do you make! and how could I withstand it, if really there were any thing wrong or unreasonable in my proposal? But why shock me by the supposition that I would tempt that purest of hearts to any thing against itself? Why imagine that I, who would lay down my life to preserve any one of your principles, on which your honour or happiness depended, would, for a selfish purpose, seek to seduce those principles, or weaken the resolution that guarded them? Be more just to the man whom you have so exalted by your dear, your delicious confession."

"Oh! talk not to me thus," answered Georgina.

" You task my weakness to withstand what you know to be your strength, and which nothing but Heaven, in whose cause I feel I am a sacrifice, can enable me to resist,—if, indeed, I can resist it!"

Tremaine saw all his advantage elicited by the frankness of this speech, and, to his eternal honour let it be recorded, that he did not push it in the moment when, perhaps, the victory would have been his.

Reflecting an instant, he took her hand once more, and, with the elevation that was at times peculiar to him, and, at the same time, a calmness proceeding from the sincerity of his purpose, " My soft, yet noble girl," said he, " no appeal of this sort could ever be made to me in vain, even if I were not, as I am, penetrated with gratitude for your kindness, and admiration at the honesty which has disdained to conceal it. Let me not, therefore, endeavour to push you when off your guard, or surprise you into promises which your reason may hereafter repent. To avoid all this, and remove, indeed, from myself a temptation I cannot withstand, allow me to propose a reference of my offer to your father. In his hands, even the dear prejudices of your heart in my favour will surely be safe; and, should he decide for me, you cannot have a fear."

Georgina was penetrated to her heart at this honourable conduct. She looked at Tremaine with a confidence she had never ventured upon before. Her eyes fixed themselves upon him with an expression of affection indeed, but so mingled with respect, that it amounted to little short of veneration. It is very certain that the world did not seem to her ever to have contained a being, with all his errors, like the person who then stood before her.

She could only ejaculate that he was the most generous of friends, and that she accepted the proposal. Nor could she deny herself to the fond embrace on which he now, for the first time, ventured; a ratification, as he hoped, of a compact which would render them all in all to each other.

CHAPTER XXII.

NOT PERHAPS EXPECTED.

> Never shall you lie by Portia's side
> With an unquiet soul.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

If this were a work of fiction, (which I have often hinted it is not,) and I had power over events so as to make what facts I pleased, I should certainly here be for obeying the rules of poetical justice, and rewarding Mr. Tremaine and his lovely mistress, by making them one. I should only have to lay his proposal before the Doctor, who, I think, might fairly enough accede to it; and there would then want little to close the story and the reader's fatigue at once.

But this the truth forbids; for a far different fate awaited Tremaine, than, perhaps, it may be thought his generosity deserved. He was, in fact, not permitted even to make the experiment he had offered.

Agitated and unnerved beyond everything she had before experienced in her life, Georgina broke from his arms, yet with a softness which only made her ten thousand times more his than ever. She entreated for time and opportunity to compose herself.

"It will do me good," said she, "to be alone for a little while, to recall my scattered senses, which I seem to have lost. Heaven knows I little thought to have seen this hour. It has been a bitter one to me."

"It has been bitter," said Tremaine, "and yet there have been things in it that have made it the sweetest of my life. May I not hope that this sentiment is in some degree participated by my adored friend?"

The words were gratifying to Georgina, yet she gave a deep sigh, and loosened her hand from his, and repeating that what she had confessed she never would deny, she said it was absolutely necessary for her to be alone.

"Here," added she, "I am really too much in the power of my feelings."

Tremaine, respecting her as usual, told her she could not express a wish that was not a command to him; and raising her hand to his lips, which she showed no disposition to oppose, he allowed her to retire.

In point of fact, he had himself almost the same necessity for solitude, if not to recover himself, at least to deliberate what course to pursue. His first purpose which was to seek his friend, and lay his proposal before him, he checked. It is impossible for him to agree to it, thought he, and then what becomes of this situation, which, with all its uncertainties, so delights me, that my senses are giddy with the thought of it!

In truth, strange as it may appear, though nothing was less determinate than his prospect, there was no moment of his life that had ever appeared so delicious to him. Such is always the effect, when we love, of the first avowal that our love is returned. Dreading to lose it, Tremaine became absolutely afraid to meet the friend whom he at first so resolutely intended to seek. He was but a few paces off, for Tremaine had seen him loitering within call, during his conference with Georgina; yet his heart sank, when his mind inclined him to join Evelyn in the garden. Longing therefore to be alone, to hug himself as it were in the thought that he was beloved by her, whom alone of all the world he thought worth loving, and wishing besides for time to examine himself more closely than he had ever yet done, in order to see whether he could not really in some degree approach the wishes of the adored of his heart,—he fairly shrank for the moment from his purpose, and ordering his horses to follow him, took the road on foot to his own park.

As he passed up the avenue that led from the house, he could not help turning to take a view of what was now so much dearer than ever to him. Georgina's chamber was in that front, and at the window at that moment, reclining with her head on her hand, and showing the whitest, and most graceful arm in the world, he beheld Georgina herself.

Their surprise was mutually great at seeing each other again; Georgina's in particular; and he could not help returning, if only to apprise her of his intention to pass an hour or two at home, after which he would have the honour of waiting upon her again. She bowed and kissed her hand with the grace that always so enchanted him, and while he lingered in sight, at least as long as it was necessary, often did he turn to give and receive greetings, the proofs of the mutual understanding which now informed them.

But alas for Tremaine! it is needless to recount the occupation that engaged him, or the trains of thought into which he fell; the plans he revolved, or the agitations he underwent, during the four hours immediately after his return home. His loiterings on the way, his seclusions afterwards in the closest walks of his gardens and shrubberies, and a long letter to Evelyn, the result of his meditation:—all this, as it would probably not have brought him nearer to his purpose, so in effect it was rendered abortive before the experiment could be tried, by a packet which was now delivered to him. The packet came from Evelyn, and enclosed a letter from Georgina, in addition to his own.

Evelyn's was very short, though very kind. It told him that Georgina had herself rendered the generous proposal of which she had apprised him abortive, by a resolution she had taken even previous to her communicating it to him, and had begged him to transmit it in the letter he enclosed. It concluded with an expression of admiration of his honourable conduct, and a fond wish that his principles might yet change—change however from conviction, without which, he agreed with Georgina in deprecating for a time their future intercourse.

Good God! what was the situation of Tremaine on reading these indistinct allusions—indistinct, yet seemingly of so decisive a kind. Georgina's packet was seized in a sort of despair, and his hand trembled as if palsied, while it broke the seal, and he read as follows:—

"To the most generous and noble of men,

"Such has my heart long thought you, and never

so much as in this cruel moment, when the most painful sense of duty forces me to forego all that that heart can wish to value.

" If there is indecorum or impropriety of any kind in confessing this, surely it may be forgiven after what has so recently passed, and as a poor relief to the sorrow which dictates what I am about to write—if I can write. The secret of my inmost bosom you are possessed of; nor scarcely do I regret that it has been unveiled. I will never retract it, never disguise the effect which accomplishments, goodness, and delicate kindness, kindness such as I never before knew, have had upon the friend you have been pleased to distinguish. Ah! that you had not been so generous, that you were less candid, less good, less noble! how much of this bitterness would then be spared me! How comparatively easy the struggle that seems to burst a heart, which feels (alas! that I should use such language), that it cannot be yours and God's at the same time!

" Oh! that your mind, so admirable in all honourable principle, so alive to tenderness, and all that a woman can love, would open to religious truth!—That it will, that it must, is my persuasion, my conviction as well as my wish. But till it does so, forgive a poor struggling girl, (who is miserable in either alternative,) if she has acquired force of mind enough to sacrifice her fondest, softest wishes, to what she conceives, nay is sure is her duty.

" Oh! Mr. Tremaine, think not this resolve has been made without effort, without even pain and sorrow, which on my knees I have prayed fervently of that God to whom I have made this sacrifice, may be spared to *you*. I who alone am doomed to afflict you, ought alone to be the sufferer—and ah! believe that I do suffer. The tears which flow while I write, heaven will I hope forgive, though the feeling that prompts them seems to rebel against that heaven while they do flow. I trust that strength will be given me to controul the weakness (shall I call it so?) that makes me falter. Yet if you should mistake or misjudge me; if the man who I have con-

fessed is the master of my heart, and who has given me the rich gift of his own, should suppose that I am capricious or unsettled in my knowledge of myself—that my affection is lightly won, or easily parted with—sacrificed in short to anything but my God—dearly and terribly will my misery be enhanced. But Mr. Tremaine is too just to do this. It is my wretchedness to think that he cannot perhaps appreciate the extent and urgency of the duty which governs me, even to the seeming extinction of my happiness. But he will at least allow for my principles; he will think me a sincere, and not look down upon me as a wavering woman.

"Hear then the result of my pure, my sacred, and, as far as human influence is concerned, my unassisted resolve.

"Loving, reverencing, and fearing God as I do, adoring him in his providence, and humbling myself before him with trembling resignation, it revolts me to think that he who could absorb my earthly love, my fondest attachment, my whole reverence and esteem, should think little of all these sacred feelings; that he should disparage my mind's most ardent devotion; should not only not participate, but by his conduct seem to resist, all that my soul holds most awful and dear:—all this terrifies me even at this distance to think of. What would it do if the thought were daily and hourly worked up in every act of my future life? What would be the effect of this vital difference practically showing itself, where all ought to be union without alloy?

"Forgive me, oh! forgive me, if I feel sure that it could not come to good; that to you I could not be *your* Georgina, the Georgina you have fancied; and that to *me* you could not be that unerring, that infallible guide, to whom I would, on all occasions, commit my spirit to be directed, 'As from my Lord, my Governor, and King.'

"'Tis true you made an offer that penetrated my heart, and shook my resolution—nay overcame it. But how, and in what manner? Ah! let your own heart answer, and say what place there then was for reason or

resolution, when the sudden surprise of tenderness displaying itself for the first time—no, I am sure this will not be fixed upon me, by the most generous of men, to my disadvantage. The prayers I afterwards poured out to the Ruler of all things, were heard; and God has given me strength to address you as I ought. It is he, and not I, that tells you your proposal, generous as it is, would of necessity be abortive—that my unhappiness at your doubts would not be the less because they were concealed, and that you would not the less lament my supposed weakness, because you had kindly consented, as you thought, never to probe it. It is the voice of God, and not mine that tells you this.

"How weak mine alone would be, my throbbing heart indeed too fatally convinces me. Listen then to this powerful voice, that implores you to seek him with fervour and sincerity. Seek, and you shall find him; and when you *have* found him, need I say that you have found me. But till then, though shattered, unnerved, torn with contending emotions, and weighed to the ground with distress, my way is yet clear before me—pointed out by Heaven itself; nor dare I swerve from it. Alas! that I should have to say it leads me from *you*. I can scarcely write the words; my kind father will tell you the rest: and it is my weakness (throwing itself upon *you* for support), that bids me add the necessity there is, until a happier time shall dawn, that we should meet no more."

It will not be easy to describe the thousand contending feelings that agitated Tremaine, nay, tore him to pieces, while reading this letter. It was long before he could be said to understand the meaning of the words, which yet he read over a fourth and a fifth time, before he gave himself breath to ask what it was that had been addressed to him; for he could scarcely comprehend what it was he was called upon to do, to say, or to unsay—in short, how to act towards Georgina, her father, or himself.

Shall we say that he was piqued—that the hectic of a moment ——— Yes! for his natural irritability did for that moment flash across his cheek, and he was piqued even with his adored Georgina. Alas! how soon to lose

the little courage it gave him! how soon to sink lower and lower in all the bitterness and grief of disappointment! How did he even execrate himself for having, for that scarcely perceptible moment, thought (for it vanished before he could give it utterance), that Georgina had wavered, had been weak, had been unjust! Too soon, indeed, was he deprived of this cruel consolation, in order to plunge into all the despair of increased love and admiration—increased an hundred fold by the fortitude she had displayed.

Yet so near the fruition of all his hopes! To have had all his fears, his jealousies of himself and others so completely allayed! To have been told things by herself that quieted all his alarms, and breathed sweetness into his very soul, seemingly for ever: yet to be deprived of all this, as soon as told!

It must be owned it required a self-possession more than human, to receive such tidings with equanimity.

It far surpassed Tremaine's, and having recovered from the sort of stupefaction into which he first fell, and afterwards from that quick throb of pride which has been mentioned—and which lasted for six, or at most ten pulses—misery and agitation, and wonder, hesitation and irresolute purpose, yet mixed, if I may so say, with resolute despair, all got possession of him, and all left him by turns. The only thing certain and permanent about him was his misery.

And now, reader, shall we close this account, and leave the rest to conjecture? Willingly would we do so rather than have to record the unhappiness, nay, the wretchedness of the excellent Georgina.

It must, however, be recorded, for it involved her in a struggle which, day after day, and week after week, consumed her, till it proved to be beyond her strength, and ended at length in a decline of health which sank the good Evelyn as well as herself to the brink of the grave.

It is certain that the abandonment of Woodington (for it was abandoned) by its owner, left a blank in Evelyn Hall, which nothing could fill up. Its occupations, useful and innocent, and therefore happy; its comforts, its cheer-

fulness, and even its hospitalities, seemed to have left it for ever; and many a time has honest Jack been known to stop his horse, as he rode across the avenue, and shaking his head, observe, while a tear unchecked would course down his cheek, that the chimneys did not smoke as they used to do. The poor, indeed, came as usual, and as usual never were turned away; but the cottagers no longer ran out to their little gates, in the eagerness of joy, to welcome dear Miss Georgy, and tell her how pure rosy she looked:—to hope she was better, and that the fever had left her, and then return to their wheels or chimney-corners, with blank looks and sighing hearts, was now the sad termination of interviews once so exhilarating.

As to Evelyn, bowed to the earth, and nearly broken-hearted, his resignation only kept him from sinking quite. And who shall describe the look with which he sometimes contemplated the fading face he so much loved, or the agony with which, in his closet, or his solitary walk, he commended his amiable daughter to the protection of God!

CHAPTER XXIII.

SUSPENSE.

The house doth keep itself,
There's none within.

SHAKSPEARE.

It was the next morning but one after Tremaine had received the important packet from Georgina, that Evelyn, having heard nothing from him in return, rode over to Woodington. The lodges were tenanted as usual, and the gate thrown open with the customary civil salutes; and, when he arrived at the great hall door, a groom ran out from the offices, as he had been wont, to take his horse. The hall was unpeopled by servants;

but as that, since Tremaine's seclusion, was but a common occurrence, it seemed nothing particular, and Evelyn, as he had been accustomed, made his way alone to the long dining-room, which opened on the terrace, and through that to the library, which flanked that end of the house.

That no master was there to be found, did not surprise him; his books were all open upon their desks, pens were still in the ink, some notes in writing lay on the table, and Evelyn, therefore, made sure of finding his friend in the garden or park, to which he immediately bent his steps.

But when, after full half an hour's search, he returned from the grounds without having seen the trace of a human creature, much less of the master, his heart took the alarm; and, aware of his friend's ebullitions, in conduct as well as in feeling, though not suspicious, he began to suspect.

Betaking himself to the bell of the library, he rang hard, in hopes of being answered by his friend, Monsieur Dupuis. Not even a lacquey appeared; and, fearing that there might be illness, he mounted the stairs to seek Tremaine in his bed-chamber. But not only the bed-chamber was tenantless, but all was solitary, vacant, and deserted. He coursed the gallery (above a hundred feet long), without meeting a soul; and, as a last resource, descended to seek in the stables for the groom, who had taken his horse, in order to obtain from him the information that now seemed painfully necessary.

A better informant met him on the way, and he was really relieved at the sight of his respectable friend, Mrs. Watson.

"Oh! Sir," said this attached adherent, "I was in hopes you would have come yesterday, and I was just going down to the hall to ask after my poor master?"

"Ask after him, my good Watson! what can have happened!"

"Ah, Sir! you know best, for it was your last packet that set him off; he was like wild to us all from the time he received it."

Here the good woman became too agitated to proceed, and could only wring her hands and bemoan herself. Evelyn, though he knew her, could not prevent some alarm in himself; but concealing it, inquired, with as much calmness as he could muster, where her master was?

"By this time at Belmont," replied Watson, "as be sure you must know from Mr. Dupuis."

"I have not seen Dupuis," said Evelyn, with surprise.

"That nasty Frenchman!" exclaimed Watson. "He went to you, as I thought, from my master, when he told me to pack up all his clothes."

"All his clothes!"

"Yes, all! for I asked him for how long he was going, thinking he might be only going to York, or so; but he said he did not know when, if ever, he should come back. But Belmont is a vile place for him, Sir, as you know; and he won't stay there neither, for from what Dupuis said, I am sadly afeard he will go abroad again. Oh! who would have thought it—so comfortable as we was all getting! Oh! dear Sir, if you and Miss Georgy ———, but, to be sure, I beg pardon—to be sure I am but a servant."

Here the good creature, who was in sincere grief, was obliged to stop, though she might have gone on long for any interruption that Evelyn was inclined to give her. He was, indeed, somewhat quieted from the alarm he had at first experienced; but a long train of thoughts and fears, which what she was saying had conjured up to his imagination, occupied him so much, that he felt no necessity to question her farther than to ascertain, if possible, the route of his friend.

He learned that he had gone the first stage towards Ferrybridge with his own horses, which had long been returned, and were to remain, with all the stable people, till further orders.

Could Watson have told more, it is certain she would not have concealed it; as certain that she did all that was consistent with her own sense of decorum and respect to her superiors, and for Evelyn in particular, to gather,

if possible, what had passed between Tremaine and the Evelyn Hall family. That something critical had happened, she saw; and her malicious coadjutor, Monsieur Dupuis, had asserted most positively that Tremaine had offered, and been refused by Georgina; but this she would never believe. Nay, she was sure that he had only to offer to be accepted, as she often said, by the finest lady in the land. The valet denied this, partly to tease her, partly from a secret wish that some mortification might happen to Tremaine; which his affronts, as he called them, from his master, made him believe was not more natural than justifiable.

Evelyn, perceiving that nothing more was to be gained from Watson, took his leave of that good woman, with expressing a hope that better times would come.

CHAPTER XXIV

A WONDERING.

> Your Provost knows the place where he abides.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

> Why, how now, Monsieur! what a life is this,
> That your poor friends must woo your company.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

The return of Evelyn to his home was mournful and slow. He was lost in anxious doubt as to the intentions of Tremaine, and the ultimate fate both of him and of his daughter. That he should fly from Woodington, did not surprise—perhaps, at the moment, did not displease him; that he should choose Belmont as a refuge, grieved him; but the surmise that he might go abroad was the least satisfactory of all. What puzzled, and perhaps hurt him most, was, that he should take any resolution without informing them.

"He cannot be angry with us!" exclaimed he to

himself. "And yet he is a proud man! Alas! if it had not been so, he perhaps had not been an infidel."

Better thoughts of him succeeded. "Poor, poor fellow! he is suffering to the bottom of his heart, and all from honour. He cannot close such a heart against us."

This was Evelyn's soliloquy, and this brought him home, but not to happiness, for it was no longer to a daughter's smile.

The brow of Georgina clouded more and more at the tidings he brought: and when he related the possibility, nay probability, that Tremaine might leave the kingdom, her heart sunk within her.

"Here, at least," said she, "we might know the state of his mind. But whatever happens, surely he will return, and tell it to us himself."

Still weeks and months elapsed, and no communication was received by this afflicted father and daughter, from the friend whose happiness or misery had so entirely depended upon them; and though they learned from Watson (the only informant they had left) that he had quitted Belmont, and that all the house servants had been discharged, yet they saw the long, long year close over their heads without receiving the smallest tidings from Tremaine himself.

What was almost worse, the sinking state of his daughter, exclusive of the pangs it naturally excited, began to be accompanied with reflections cruel and bitter to the good heart of Evelyn: for, firm as he was to the purpose he thought right, particularly when connected with his religious duty, he began to question whether both himself and Georgina had not dealt too hardly by their friend; and, therefore, whether much of the misery, both as to the past and the future, might not have been avoided.

Forgive him, Heaven, for this! forgive him, all the stoics, and all the critics of the world! When he saw the faded, sunken cheek of such a creature as Georgina had been—saw her struggling with a sorrow that seemed only becoming more and more rooted, yet assuming, or rather striving to assume, a smile to please him, which the ghostly paleness of her countenance seemed to convert

into mockery—his heart must have been hard indeed, if it had not sometimes suffered itself to be affected by a weakness of this sort. Heaven knows, it bore its own punishment along with it.

A journey to Belmont itself, by Evelyn, in order to ascertain, if possible, whether its master were again really buried there, or what had been his intentions when he quitted it, proved wholly unavailing. Neither could the servants, left there in charge, nor any one in the neighbourhood, nor Dr. Asgill himsef (the sensible physician who had formerly corresponded with Evelyn concerning Tremaine), give the smallest tidings of his steps. That he had been there for a week, during which he had confined himself to the house, and at length had left the place with post-horses, and entirely unattended—was all they could relate, for it was all they had learned; and Evelyn returned home to his drooping girl, to see her droop still more; and though her mind was supported by her piety, her tender frame was evidently shaken by a struggle too violent for its strength.

Once, and once only, a little gleam seemed to open upon their melancholy. In Oxford, that beautiful Athens —where groves, and gardens, and towers, and cathedrals, and consecrated walks by mead or river, are mingled in delight; where philosophy revels, ambition prepares itself for its career, or retreats after being satiated; in short, in that fairy land of genius and instruction, so full of all interests, whether of elegant taste or learned lore, Evelyn, in very fondness for the nursing mother of his mind, had kept up an occasional correspondence (if so a letter in a twelvemonth could be called) with one or two of its resident members. One of them, a Mr. Davenport, full fifteen months after Tremaine's flight, wrote to Evelyn as follows:—

"I think I never mentioned to you your neighbour 'Squire, Mr. Tremaine, who you once said had so interested and enlivened your old northern hall. Interested he may, but I should think he never could have enlivened it. At least we are all puzzled about him here, considering his station in the world, the busy hours of his

former life, and his former distinction both public and private. Here, to be as little distinguished as possible, to be buried in the silence of his rooms, immersed in no one knows what studies (for with scarce any one does he converse), in short, to be a college machine, seems to be the changed lot of this once brilliant and conspicuous character. You never told me of his coming, and we are all strangers to him except the President, whom alone he visits, and with whom alone he converses. To us Fellows he is civil enough, but in his civility he is most melancholy. He reads and walks a great deal, but always alone, and the latter chiefly at night. No evening but sees him for an hour, or perhaps two, in Addison's Walk, from which he always retires if any one invade him; which I must say no one is disposed to do: for, considering his rank, fortune, connexions, and present vacuity, we look upon him as little more than an illustrious mope."

Evelyn almost let fall this letter when it first came to hand. To read this account of his friend, both surprised and distressed him; but to hear of him at all was overpowering, and from such a place most unlooked-for. Yet to hear was a sort of pleasure of itself, though mingled with regret that he should have left them so long without intelligence. It was evident, however, from Mr. Davenport's style, that he had no thought but that Evelyn knew better than himself both the fact of his retreat, and the cause of it.

Two moments sufficed to take his resolution what to do—two days to carry it into effect; for it was no longer a time before Evelyn set out for Oxford in search of his unhappy friend.

During the first days of his absence the feelings of Georgina may be easily conceived. The natural buoyancy of her mind permitted it to be somewhat raised from that dull and listless weariness of spirit, which had taken the place of her charming vivacity. Her lovely beauty seemed almost to revive, and a real rose nearly took place of the hectic on her cheek. She counted the hours to the first post from Oxford, and the seal of her letter was broken in

an agony of mingled emotion. Into what did it subside, if it could be said to subside, when she read that the object of her father's search was not to be found; having, he said, withdrawn himself from Oxford, the very day after the date of Mr. Davenport's letter. He had, by chance, seen this letter in Davenport's hands, and was astonished to find, upon questioning him, that he was the Doctor's old acquaintance and occasional correspondent.

Why Tremaine had withdrawn, neither Davenport nor the President of the College (to the last of whom he had merely signified his intention) could even guess, much less tell.

From the President, however, Evelyn was able, before he took his leave, to procure some few particulars, as to the life and habits of his eccentric friend, during his monastic seclusion: for such it seemed.

"One would have supposed," said the President, "that these had been the cloisters of the Paraclete, or La Trappe, instead of the rational retirement of a studious man; so much did our friend shun the very little society that presented itself to him; and, in regard to the silence, so nearly did he appear to have taken the vows. Had he been as devout as he was regular in the discipline of prayers, or had he been as steady in his convictions as he was serious in his subject of inquiry, I should have thought that Abelard or De Rancé had renounced the tumults and temptations of the world, and had retired hither to repentance and meditation*. And yet," added the President, "considering his extremely fair, nay, his high character in the world, and also many acts of good-

* De Rancé was a man of quality, early in the seventeenth century, in France; a scholar, but of most careless and dissipated life; in the midst of which, struck with several instances of providence in the preservation of his own person, his conversion was perfected, by the sudden sight of his mistress, whom he had gone to see (as he thought, revelling in health and beauty), stretched in her coffin. At the age of thirty-seven, he retired from court, where he had great power; gave away his estates, and shut himself up in his Abbaye of La Trappe, of which he restored the discipline.

ness that came to our ears,—he was a mystery which I own I could not unravel."

"Did he not communicate with you?" asked Evelyn.

"Little," said the President, "though more than with any one else. Our former acquaintance, and the turn of his studies, together, perhaps, with some little opinion he was pleased to have formed that I might be able to assist his objects, induced to do him me the honour of opening himself to me in a very small degree, when with others he was as silent as the night walks he was so fond of."

"May I ask those objects?" said Evelyn.

"I have miscalled them," answered the President; "I should rather have said, the subjects he was upon."

"And what were they," continued Evelyn.

"Metaphysics, and those of the deepest kind: all the high genera; the keenest subtleties of scepticism; Spinozism, Hobbes, and Des Cartes."

"You make me tremble," said Evelyn.—"I would rather it had been the Bible, Newton, and Clarke."

"They were by no means wanting," continued the President; "and the avidity with which all were pursued, was more like that of a keen student about to take his degree in divinity, than a man so entirely of the world, for such he certainly was, however he might, from I know not what cause, be enamoured of retreat."

"Did he assign no cause?" asked Evelyn.

"He opened himself *as self* very little, or rather not at all," observed the President; "and it was not for me to ask his confidence. Yet it was evident there was something in his mind more than mere love of philosophy, or a christian desire to work out salvation."

"Was there *anything* of the last?" inquired Evelyn, with interest.

"I should say, not much," returned the President, "though it was certainly not altogether wanting. His aim seemed truth."

"A good aim!"

"No doubt! But with all this, there was a gloom, a fear, a doubt of himself, and all attended with an indescribable melancholy, that made me sometimes suspect

all was not right in his head. And this was rather confirmed than weakened, by his mode of living."

"As how?" asked Evelyn.

"In a manner wholly unworthy either his rank or fortune, or his known liberality. No acquaintance; scarcely a servant, or a horse; the mere College fare, abstemious as to that, and always alone. The hall scarcely ever saw him; and his lamp burned long after every other in Oxford was extinguished, and every soul in College at rest."

"You interest me greatly," cried Evelyn—"and his departure you say....."

"Was even more sudden and unexpected than his arrival. As he merely wrote me a word a week before he came, of his intention to reside on his fellowship—which he had never, you know, renounced amidst all his gay or busy pursuits—so, the very day of his quitting us, he contented himself with announcing his intention to me, as his superior in the place, and returning his thanks for what he was pleased to call my civilities as a friend."

It was with grief, but ill-disguised, that Evelyn felt forced, from this conversation, to give up all hope of the discoveries he had endeavoured to make. One thing only appeared; that Tremaine, whatever might have induced him to fly even the commonest intercourse with the friends who had once so absorbed him, was deeply and sincerely plunged in those subjects on which they had so cruelly differed; and if his object, as the good President said, was truth, he could not, as Evelyn hoped, long resist its demonstration.

This gilded a little, though but a little, the gloom with which he took leave of his College friends; from whom he carefully concealed the real intention of his visit, which passed for one of mere interest about the place he had always so much loved. He took London in his way back, on the thankless errand of inquiring at Tremaine's banker's, after that unfortunate friend;—thankless, because nothing could he elicit from the real or well-feigned ignorance of the cautious persons of whom he made the inquiry.

This overthrow to all hope, after it had been so excited, only made the situation both of father and daughter worse than it had been before.

That lovely flower again hung its head, under the very hand that endeavoured, with unremitting affection, to prop and protect it. Health seemed for ever gone; the medical aid that had been used, was discontinued, as unavailing: and Evelyn agreed with his friend, Dr. Asgill, who had come all the way from Northamptonshire to visit them, that the case was beyond his reach.

"The mind is always so," said this unpretending person, "nor do we affect to cure it: it is sufficient happiness if we can reach the ills of body. But mind may be soothed, may be diverted, and particularly by change of place. Evelyn is too lonely for one who is evidently

'Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.'"

"You advise, then," said Evelyn, "a change of air, of place?"

"I do," said Dr. Asgill, "and as far from home as you please."

CHAPTER XXV.

A TOUR.

At pleasure here we lie, near Orleans.

SHAKSPEARE.

A SICK mind finds no interest or pleasure, and therefore no ease, in cities. Where men and women, and even children, are shouldering one another in a perpetual race—where every nerve strives, and every pulse beats with some great passion, even to bursting—there is no room for the stricken deer to lie down, though but to die, much less to endeavour to recover.

The chariot wheels of Lord and Lady St. Clair, of Mrs. Neville, of Tremaine's political friend Lord A. (who it may be remembered, had deserted him), and of a hundred other minions of splendour, who have their reward in this life, drove not one inch the slower than their usual pace, because Georgina might be dying of a broken heart, or Tremaine perishing by inches wherever he might be; the one in the cause of heaven, the other of honour. No! like Macbeth, they were content to find the 'Be all, and the end all, here;' and provided that were brilliant, 'they jump'd the life to come.'

It was not, therefore, among such as these, that either Evelyn or Georgina could obtain that diversion for thoughts ill at ease, or remedy for health undermined, which both of them so needed. Yet something there was to both, in the little excitements occasioned by a change of place, which no heart, however monotonously disposed, but sometimes feels. This was not, however, in the towns they had visited. To Georgina, and Evelyn too, in their present state, London seemed one vast vacuity, and Paris a burning dream.

It was at the gate of a cottage garden in the Orléannois, in one of the softest evenings ever known in France, that a graceful little French girl, with brown but well turned hands, presented a scarcely browner loaf and a glass of milk to Georgina; and this little French girl looked so *naïve* and *éveillée*, and was dressed so piquantely, in a jacket and short jupe, showing the most charming symmetry at every turn; and the simple rose with which she had decked her dark hair, just where it parted, Madona-like, across her oval polished forehead, was so tastefully disposed; and moreover she curtseyed her thanks so prettily for the little piece of silver bestowed upon her for the milk and bread she had supplied; she was so humble, yet so proud withal, to have done anything for so sweet a lady—"Mademoiselle est si douce, et si malade," said the little French girl; all this, together with the scene around, excited more interest in Georgina than anything she had met with since she left Yorkshire.

It was, indeed, a scene to do the heart good; especially if it wanted soothing: for not only was the air in that soft climate, and softest of evenings, a luxury sufficient for the most sickly sense, but the cottage garden, at the gate of which the poor exhausted Georgina had stopped, was a blaze of flowers, displaying such colours, and emitting such scents, as we poor islanders, with all our ruralities, are condemned never to know. Then, again, in a large stack-yard, only just across the garden, the fragrant process of building several hayricks was going on. These were supplied by a succession of carts, drawn by oxen, from the plain of Orleans, which lay but a short distance off. The venerable pile of its cathedral could indeed be distinctly seen in the distance, and its curfew heard, as if warning all travellers to come within its protection before night should set in.

Georgina, however, was much more disposed to listen to a song of birds, perfectly ravishing, that arose from the echoing of a number, seemingly endless, of nightingales and thrushes, that lived on the banks of the copsy stream which passed the end of the little garden. This fairy rivulet ran winding under various root-formed banks, and gurgling over mossy stones, till it broke out of the valley into the great plain of Orleans above mentioned; where, uniting itself with the Loire, it proceeded in broad and majestic march, till, at a distance, it seemed lost among the ever-memorable walls and consecrated steeples of this old, eventful, and still respectable city. All this formed exactly a fit scene, both for father and daughter.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ECCENTRIC.

Though this be madness, yet there's method in't!

SHAKSPEARE.

You are a gentleman of my own way.

SHAKSPEARE.

We have exerted ourselves much in vain, if the reader has not by this time formed such a notion of Evelyn's character, or rather disposition, as to believe that whenever he was free from the trammels of his ordinary life, he was anything but an ordinary traveller, over whatever road he chose to take. With all his practical knowledge and habits of business, he had been, particularly in his youth, and was even now, the child of his feelings for the time being. Those feelings, though always natural, approached sometimes even to the romantic. This had made him often be thought eccentric by the world; though perhaps the eccentricity was no more than to pursue a by-path, or a cross tract, when the eye beaten way was not so agreeable. I mean this not merely as a figure.

He was particularly fond of making journeys, whether of business or pleasure, on horseback; and on these occasions no man alive, not of a similar mind, could make him out. A fine prospect would always take him a mile out of the road, perhaps over hedge and ditch; nor, magistrate as he was, did he scruple to commit a trespass on such an occasion, if he could not enjoy what he wanted without it.

Above all, what he could never resist when alone, was a clean village inn, or country garden, in any sequestered spot, if there was a rich, busy, or merely quiet landscape around it. Here he would sometimes loiter for days at a time, though expected elsewhere. This was the sort of solitude he enjoyed; and as he had

always books, and read, wrote, and thought much, he traced many of his best acquisitions to these moments of seclusion.

Seclusion, indeed, he denied it to be; for though he might pass hours either in the window thet had first tempted him, by overlooking a fresh garden, or a wood impervious to the sun in the heat of the day, yet he could, he said, return to the world whenever the stage coach stopped to water or change horses; and there was always the resource of the inn kitchen.

This liberty was so pleasing to him, that the proximity even of friends could not tempt him to interrupt it; and he is known to have passed two whole days at the gate of a park belonging to a very old acquaintance, without the owner of it ever knowing he had been there.

Many of his notes, with which his book were plenteously interlined, were dated from these out of the way places, which, to be sure, did not always seem congenial to the subjects revolved. Some of the deepest point in Adam Smith were dated from a goatherd's cottage on the Alps; and a Commentary on Colliber's Treatise on the Soul was signed from the Stag and Hounds in Windsor Forest.

And yet, I have often heard him say, that some of his purest enjoyments were the fruit of these temporary deviations; which, however, were generally much more agreeable to the master than to his unsentimental servant.

"You will lose ten hours if you stay here, Sir"—said his groom once to him, who was in alarm at his only eyeing the sign of the Royal Oak, hanging half way up a hill, embosomed in wood.

"But I shall gain ten years of existence," replied Evelyn, "so pull up the horses,"

. John knew there was nothing left for it, for "Master," as he said to the ostler as he helped to unsaddle, "was in one of his whims." He therefore obeyed, whistling, not for want of, but to divert thought; for, in fact, he wanted to be home, and could not help lamenting that so

wise a man as his master should know so little about travelling.

Such were some of the passages of his former, and particularly of his bachelor life: and his disposition on these points was participated, till health forbade, by the partner of his heart. It had now rather subsided, but easily revived when occasion called it forth; and in these respects, and at the present moment, though little equal now to anything out of the beaten track, he was not ill seconded by the drooping Georgina herself.

"And what is your name, *petite?*" asked the Doctor, of the little French hostess.

"Lisette, Monseigneur," returned she, dropping her twentieth curtsey very low indeed, at being spoken to, as she thought, from his black habit, and barouche à quatre chevaux, by a Bishop, or grand Vicaire, at least.

"And how far to Orleans?"

"C'est tout près," continued Lisette, "only the bridge is broke down, close to the city, and the ford is very bad,"

"Ce n'est rien," said the postilion, striding up in his long jack boots, "and besides, there is a ferry boat, and we can shift all the luggage."

"And the inn?"

"C'est superbe," cried the postilion, "et pour le chef de cuisine, un Cordon bleu! You will be there in no time," continued the postilion—"You would have been there and at supper by this, if it had not been for this little *chose*, and her diantre de pain bis."

The postilion, though a Frenchman, was not sentimental, and had little taste for cottages, when there were all the charms of the Lion d'Or in the grande Place d'Orléans, close by the magnificent cathedral, and the evening promenade of the whole town besides, only waiting, as it were, for their arrival.

Both Evelyn and Georgina thought differently. They looked and looked upon the landscape, and scented the surrounding sweets again and again, and felt all the charms of summer twilight stealing over their senses.

"My dear," said the Doctor, "I'm thinking, if such a thing were possible, and we could stay here to-night, instead of going into a close town—"

"It would be delightful!" exclaimed Georgina—"and we might be amused with Lisette."

"Let us inquire," said Evelyn.

"If there be but bedding," said Georgina, "we shall want nothing else; I care little for the *cordon bleu*."

"I see an arbour of vine leaves," observed Evelyn, getting out of the carriage.

La petite Lisette wondered what all this was to lead to, seeing him and Georgina's travelling maid (not Winter) descend from the barouche. She willingly, however, attended them, answering all their questions with great promptness; but, when she found what was their aim, her countenance suddenly fell, she shook her head, and exclaimed, with that pretty *ton douloureux* which none but a French girl can express—

"Hélas! c'est impossible. Nous n'avons rien digne de Mademoiselle—ni chambre, ni lit: et ma mère! oh! comme cela est malheureux!"

Evelyn answered with a "*comment?*" and found that this little Lisette, who at most was but thirteen, had been left with her father, a market gardener, for two days in charge of the cottage, while her mother was gone to put in order the château, on a neighbouring hill above, belonging to a gentleman who was expected every day from the south.

"C'est malheureux," repeated Lisette, "il n'y a rien, ni pour la cuisine, ni pour la chambre, point de salon, point de linge, rien que des fleurs," looking at her own face, and the rose in her hair, in the only bit of glass to be found in the cottage.

In effect, however, Evelyn was much better satisfied than he himself, much more Lisette, could have expected. The cottage was, in fact, a fishing-house, belonging to the château above; there was a good sitting room, and, at least, one good bed-chamber; and every body knows that in France, whatever else may be wanting, tolerable bedding is generally sure to be found.

The barouche contained all requisite linen, and all materials for Georgina's little messes; in short, she got out of the carriage too, and seated herself, after rather a fatiguing day, in the freshest of French windows, looking immediately into the smooth gliding river beneath, from which the last gleams of twilight seemed to be retiring, while a lovely moon was just beginning to rise. Here she continued, and endeavoured to soothe her weakened spirits, while her kind father, with her maid, a French travelling valet, and the proud and pleased Lisette, had soon put everything in the best order the adventure (for so for want of a better it seemed) would admit of.

"This is better than the Lion d'Or," said Evelyn, pressing her hand, after both had in silence been contemplating the beautiful night vision, at the still open window of the pretty fishing-house.

"That river is not unlike the Wharfe in dear England," said Georgina, with a sigh.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A RENCONTRE.

Will you encounter the house?

SHAKSPEARE.

THE next morning Georgina arose a good deal refreshed, and by no means the worse for having slept in a pure honey-suckled air, instead of the smoke of the Grande Place d'Orléans. The pretty Lisette, too, continued to amuse her—performing all the duties of a hostess (by no means leaving out that of prattling) to admiration. Had she been deficient, indeed, the father had now come to her assistance. But he was a plain man, of not near so many words, intent upon his garden toil, which led him daily to the market at Orleans: and little more could be got from him, than

regrets that *la bonne femme* should be absent at such a time. She was, however, l'amie, et la confidante de Madame la Concierge of the château on the hill; and as the announced return of the owner was very sudden and unexpected, she could not possibly be spared from her task of providing furniture, particularly beds and linen, from the most celebrated tradesmen at Orleans, where she at present was.

"And who is the owner?" asked Evelyn, while Jerome was tying up his bundles of flowers, and filling his pottles with raspberries for the market at Orleans.

He really could not tell, except that he was grand officier militaire, who had just succeeded to the estate by marrying the heiress.

"And who was she?"

Of that too Jerome was ignorant; for he was himself a mere vieux soldat, only lately settled in those parts; but la bonne femme, l'amie de Madame la Concierge, knew all about it, and would certainly tell all she knew if Monsieur did not intend to proceed immediately on his journey.

'Twas the last thing that Monsieur did intend; for, pleased himself, and seeing his daughter pleased, with their pretty quarters, he resolved to stay where he was, for at least that morning.

He proposed boating (for Jerome had a boat), and Georgina, too, said she should love a few hours by that pretty river's side, while the hay was strewed in its very sweetest fragrance, on both its banks. Evelyn was delighted that anything could please her, and told her she was queen of the day. Accordingly, a garden chair was carried out into the pleasantest part of the meadow, directly opposite the château which rose on the other much higher bank of the stream. Georgina was soon established with some books, and attended by Lisette,—who, while she stayed, supplied the place of them; and the Doctor had the delight of seeing, almost for the first time for many a long month, something like placidity on the cheek of his invalid.

The hearts of both seemed to dilate. They looked

along the plain where everything was so rich, with the broad road winding through it, between a double row of elms, and cattle of all kinds tended by herdsmen from the busy city. There the great church always closed the prospect, in grandeur more venerable for a thousand classical associations that attended it, whether for a Frenchman or an Englishman.

"We shall not be able to stir to-day," said Evelyn.

"I know not why we should," observed Georgina; "and I think you have a wistful eye on the château on the hill before us."

"It stands exactly where it ought," returned the Doctor, examining it critically. "Those grey brick turrets, heavy leaden roofs, and gilt vanes, are very much to my taste, and I question if that mass of yew, so closely shaven, just along the terrace overhanging us, may not actually be cut into a temple; perhaps even a peacock itself, could one but see the inside."

"Why not make the attempt?" said Georgina. "As for me, I am so much taken with Lisette's account of a fête she was allowed to go to this time last year at Orleans, that you need not fear leaving me alone."

Evelyn patted her cheek, and set off for a little bridge that led over the river immediately up the hill, to the Château de St. Jules. He was soon there, and found no other difficulty in entering the garden, along one side of which the buildings ranged themselves, than arose from the immense weight of the iron gates that let him in. The great door of the house was in the same heavy taste, and certainly had kept the interior safe from at least the days of Louis XIV., when the front seemed to have been erected. That, too, was open, and led into a hall, from which, on each side, was a complete *enfilade* of apartments, handsome from their spaciousness, but all without furniture. As it never occurred to Evelyn that he might be taking too great a liberty even with an empty house, he became in a moment under the influence of that irregular impulse of feeling that has been mentioned, and gave way without scruple to his curiosity, or rather his taste for an old building. The style of it

brought old Louis, and all his court, before him; Villeroy, Roquelaure, Brissac, Madame de Maintenon, La Valière, Sévigné, and a thousand others; and he paced the rooms, and afterwards the gardens, and then the rooms again, with all the liberty of an absent man. He was, therefore, almost surprised, in one of his wanderings, to be asked his business by an elderly female of good address; evidently, from the bunch of keys at her girdle, the Madame la Concierge of whom he had heard. Her fly cap and lappets, short crimson petticoat under her white jacket, slippers down at heel, and milkwhite cotton stockings, displayed the complete Orléannoise and French bonne bourgeoise. Though asked with great civility, it must be owned the question was a puzzling one, and the answer to it still more so. It was at least not easy for a grave English divine like Evelyn to explain to a French housekeeper, that he was a man who, on his travels, generally followed the whim of the moment; and that that whim, combined with a great fancy for examining empty houses, and a particular taste for the style of Louis XIV., had led him, unbidden, and without permission, to scale the territory of Mount St. Jules, and invade her dominion in the manner she saw.

"C'est fort extraordinaire," said the Concierge, "bien qu'il n'y a rien à voir. Nous ne sommes pas même meublés;" and then she went on to say, that chairs, tables, beds, and *vaisselles de cuisine*, all were to arrive, only that very day, in barges, from Orleans. There was nothing but her own room, and the cabinet and *petite chambre de lit de Monsieur*, at the top of one of the turrets, that could be said to have any furniture in them at all. Evelyn would then have asked leave to see the style of the room which the top of the turret contained, and of which he supposed the correspondent turret at the end of the gallery was a counterpart; but the old lady, hearing a step from the little staircase at the bottom of which they had been debating, put her finger on her mouth, while she looked at the door of the staircase. That door opened, and to the utter and overpowering astonishment of Evelyn, he beheld Tremaine.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AN EXPLANATION.

> I never heard of such another encounter, which
> Lames report to follow it.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

More extraordinary things than this have happened. That a man who thought himself in seclusion, beyond the reach of human interruption, in a large and empty château in a very retired part of France, should be annoyed at having his retirement interrupted by the chattering of a French housekeeper with a passing traveller, and, being interrupted, should shut up his books, and descend to see who, and what was the cause of it,—cannot be wondered at. That Tremaine should, in his anxious state, fly the world more than ever, and be glad to have found such a retreat, is as little astonishing; and how he found it, will be presently explained, without there being anything marvellous in it.

On the other hand, that his two friends should, in their state, and with the medical opinion given, also have resolved upon visiting France, is in nowise surprising; neither can it astonish, that having resolved to go to the south, and Orleans being in the direct road to the south, they should have taken that road in the pursuit of their object, and stop precisely where they did stop, to give rest and diversion (the very things they came for) to the poor Georgina.

Then again, that a French girl is a very amusing thing, and that Lisette was a French girl——

But hold, I have surely shown enough of what may be called second causes in this affair, to prove that it really was not preternatural; and may therefore venture to proceed with my narrative.

The meeting may be conceived, but not described; at least not by me. I never was good at what is called a

scene, though I can faithfully record what I have been told.

The astonishment, the perturbation, the fear, the joy, the doubt, the convincing embrace, the shake by the hand, renewed and renewed, while the *pauvre concierge* remained in the back-ground, astounded, dismayed, and yet so excited as to be unable to quit the spot; all this the reader must fancy for me, and allow the matter to subside a little, before I proceed with my story.

A turn or two in the gallery brought things a little round; and we may fancy the friends stopping, as they frequently did, to survey, perhaps to criticise each other; each thinking, and not far wrong in doing so, that his friend's looks were all the worse since they parted. But when to Tremaine's question, what brought Evelyn to France, he answered, with a sigh of anxiety, "My daughter's health,"—the eagerness with which the inquiry was pursued, and the overwhelming agitation with which Tremaine learned that she was not only at hand, but almost within view,—all this I must trust to the reader's imagination; for no picture of mine can do it justice.

"Gracious Heavens!" at last exclaimed Tremaine; "what then has been my fate! I have been driven into banishment by her own command; compelled by that command to forego, to renounce, to lose her society; and find her by chance, only perhaps to lose her for ever!"

Evelyn was astonished at some parts of this speech, but endeavoured to comfort him, by saying that their reunion might do much for them all; but at present the difficulty was, to know how to break the intelligence of their extraordinary rencontre, without overpowering her already shattered nerves.

"Alas! my friend," said he, "to break up that opening scene, of what it might have pleased Heaven to convert into the perfection of mortal happiness, was sufficient bitterness; but you must not be offended if I tell you, you made bitterness tenfold more bitter, by withdrawing as you did, without an intimation of your design, or vouchsafing afterwards, for near eighteen long months, one single word of yourself, your health, state of mind, or

of those opinions upon which, you must have known, the happiness of us all was staked. Surely this was unkind to my poor girl, and much has she rued it. God grant she may ever yet recover!"

Tremaine, infinitely moved, expressed his astonishment at this reproach.

"Was I not exiled," said he, "not merely from my hopes, but my delight in her society, by her own determination? Was not my continuance near her, or even in England, refused by herself? Alas! am I to be reproached with these sad consequences of separation, when I myself repined at what I thought her unnecessary caution—I may say, almost her injustice, for condemning me to it?"

"Nay, now, my dear friend," said Evelyn, clasping his hand, "I cannot understand you; you hinted riddles to me just now; you have now told me a paradox which yourself must unravel. To banish you from our society, much more from England, was what neither I, nor my poor girl, ever either wished, or presumed to advise. Witness my own pursuit of you, first to Belmont, and then to Oxford."

"You are equally paradoxical," returned Tremaine; "for surely the long letters I wrote, both to you and Georgina, the night before I left Woodington, might convince you, that in leaving you as I did, I obeyed your own wishes. In these, I left it to you to decide upon my stay or my banishment from England itself, together with all farther intercourse; only entreating, that if the last was your decision, I might gather it simply from your silence, as I could not bear a formal decree."

"I am all astonishment!" replied Evelyn; "nor can I unriddle this mystery; and yet I am upon the whole pleased, for it convinces me that you were not proud."

"Proud! Proud to Georgina!"

"No! I am quite sure you could not be so. And yet these letters that you speak of! None of them ever came to hand."

Tremaine started, and rubbed his forehead, as if to rouse recollection.

"My scoundrel valet!" exclaimed he, "Dupuis! do you remember him?"

"It is impossible to forget him."

"To him I confided these letters. I passed great part of the night in writing them; he took them at early morn, and joined me at Ferrybridge, where I waited for the answer; but answer brought he none."

"Did he give no account?" asked Evelyn.

"Too good a one. He said he brought me your respects, but that was all. Alas! from the form I had put it in, it was answer enough!"

"I own this puzzles me," said Evelyn. "People seldom do ill without motive; but here was no interest."

"I am equally embarrassed," said Tremaine.

That the reader may not be embarrassed too, I must request him to go back with me to that last conversation between Evelyn and Watson, two mornings after Tremaine's departure from Woodington, in which Watson had protested that the Frenchman had been ordered over to Evelyn Hall by his master.

This was strictly the truth; but because he was ordered, it by no means follows that he obeyed. In fact, this prince of valets was much too great a man to allow any business, even of a master, to interfere with his own convenience or pleasures, and much too good a Frenchman not to have a little affair of gallantry of his own on hand, exactly at the moment when this order was given. Strictly to obey, and wait at Evelyn Hall till letters were written, and then ride post to Ferrybridge, would overthrow all his plans, and prevent a promised meeting with the very silly but blooming daughter of a neighbouring farmer. From the orders issued, too, it was perhaps the only meeting he could ever enjoy with his Helen: and the flesh and blood of a Frenchman could not withstand the temptation held out to him of hoped-for success, in preference to the performance of so trifling a duty as delivering a letter. As to consequences, it was only to take a verbal compliment to his master that his letters were received; and as he had resolved to quit a place so little congenial to his tastes, he calculated

(and was not wrong), that, by giving instant warning, he should be out of reach, even of inquiry, long before his neglect could be discovered. Accordingly, he gave his few remaining hours to his assignation with his fair one, instead of dancing attendance at Evelyn Hall; and as to the letters, after an abortive attempt to read them, to guard against accidents, he threw them into the fire. He then, in conformity with his plan, on joining his master, persisted in asseverating that no answer, farther than compliments, was returned.

This, as we have seen, was critical to the fate of Tremaine, to the health of Georgina, and the happiness of all. For we have hinted how Tremaine had shaped his application. He had, indeed, made Georgina the arbitress of his conduct. He had told her that he would either continue within the pale and protection of his happiness, as he called the precinct of Evelyn Hall—where he would do his utmost, with the assistance of her father, to work out those opinions on which his all of happiness depended, but which even such a reward should never make him forfeit his sincerity, in professing without conviction; or he would leave the neighbourhood, and even the kingdom itself, if she preferred it, or thought it would conduce most to the recovery of her own serenity—which he grieved, he said, to think he had invaded. Only, added he, with perhaps a too cautious and prophetic fear for his own nerves, "if the last should be your decision, and you really wish me not to see you more, do not harrow me or yourself with reasons. Your silence alone I shall too well comprehend, and no answer will be the most decisive one I can receive."

The consequences of all this are known, and it forms only one more proof, though a very special one, of

What great events from trivial causes spring.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE LOIRE.

At pleasure here we lie, near Orleans.

SHAKSPEARE.

On Evelyn's return to the fishing-house, it required infinitely less penetration than belonged to Georgina, to perceive that there was some interest in the Château de St. Jules, which her father, in general so confiding, was careful to conceal from her. Even that he should propose staying longer; set all his wits and servants to work in making the house, both inside and out, more comfortable for his invalid; and resolve to take a journey or two himself to Orleans, to make purchases for that purpose—all this did not surprise her. It fell in very well with the little taste for adventure we have commemorated; and she was so delighted herself with her window overhanging the stream, if only to sit quiet and listen to the leaping of the trout in a hot morning, that their staying there seemed the most natural thing in the world. A very few articles from a *menuisier* of Orleans, brought by water to the very door of the fishing-house, made her feel quite at home, and she was so soothed by the whole pastoral scene, that she had no wish to move.

Still she could not account for her father's frequent long absences, during the two or three mornings that afterwards ran on, and always, as he said, at the château, or at Orleans itself. It was in vain he explained that it was no longer quite the empty house he at first thought it—that he had found a library and pictures, and loved the style of it more and more. Her own wish to visit it was always opposed, on the ground that she was too weak to mount the hill: a reason, alas! but too well founded, but on that very account, a reason also for Evelyn's not leaving her so much alone.

Never was a good father so puzzled to allay curiosity, or parry questions from a daughter he loved. He objected to all fraud, even that not over piously called *pious*. Yet, if ever it could be justified, it was surely here. The greatest, the deepest interest, in fact, occupied him; and to gain a little, a very little time before he could resolve whether he should carry Tremaine to his daughter, seemed of the very utmost consequence to his heart's best objects.

It may be supposed that his joy on meeting his friend was not so absorbing as to be free from a mixture of anxiety about the *great point*. In fact, it was uppermost with him, and mingled itself, though tacitly, with every feeling that guided him, and every word he uttered. To restore Tremaine and Georgina to one another's presence, yet still forbid their minds from mixing, seemed not only cruel, but in the highest degree dangerous.

On the first day, therefore, he did all he could to evade Tremaine's ardent wish to wait upon Georgina; and the state of her health furnished him with but too good a reason to prevail. On the second, having resolved to go to Orleans to provide for their various wants, he insisted upon his friend's doing the honours of the city, with which he was well acquainted.

Behold them, then, embarked in one of the country boats, with a latine sail, laden with crockery and wine jars, and gliding along that sparkling river, winding in beautiful reaches above three miles, through the fertile plain up to the very city; luxuriant meadows on each side filled with people; the little hills rising suddenly, and crowned with pretty villas, belonging to the bons bourgeois of the town, with now and then a Château de Seigneur, like Mount St. Jules; the opening streets and churches as you approach the mouldering but picturesque walls: all this, together with the equable, cheerful motion of the boat, the bells of the horses, and songs of the conductors in the towing path, would have made Evelyn, and Tremaine, too, as happy as sense could have made them, but for their secret thought and inward melancholy.

"Confess this is a beautiful scene," cried Evelyn,

" and worth all that riches can procure, although we pay but a pièce de vingt-quatre sous for it."

" I do indeed," said Tremaine, " and I confess also that though I hate impertinent people as much as ever, I am now as much alive as, perhaps, you would have me, to the simpler scenes of nature ;—nay, and in my solitude I have at length learned to extract amusement, if not profit, from a boor. Perhaps, too,"—and he hesitated, —nay, even a blush, though not of pride, tinged his sallow cheek as he said it,—" this is not all I have to confess."

Evelyn looked at him with friendly anxiety, to examine in his countenance, if more was there than had met the ear. It is certain that the interest which lay uppermost with him, was all excited. Thinking he understood him, he exclaimed,

" With what delight shall I hail those venerable piles we are approaching, if they have restored our friend to us, such in all points as heaven intended him to be!"

This was all the allusion he ventured to make to the one great subject of his thoughts. He saw by the manner in which this was taken, that he was understood. It was all he could then expect; and, indeed, their arrival at the busy wharf where they were to land, prevented more.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE CLOISTERS.

At pleasure here we lie, near Orleans.

SHAKSPEARE.

" Ah! que c'est une superbe ville qu'Orléans!" This is the exclamation of every Frenchman, as he approaches it; and the epithet is for once not undeserved. Orleans

rises from the water in a little semicircular hill, with a bridge below, of sixteen arches, and a terrace hanging above. Its university, founded by Philippe le Bel; its forty towers, and forty-eight canonries, of which twelve are dignitaries; above all, its ancient grandeur as a church, and all its legends! Does it not do the warm heart good, to see a place like this preserved from Attila by the prayers of a bishop, and from the English, by the sword of a holy maid?

Evelyn thought of none of these things, when he first landed with Tremaine; but with a mind full of another subject, walked straight to the *menuisier's*, where they both busied themselves about Georgina's comforts. Afterwards, indeed, they visited the cathedral, and having filled themselves with much ancient lore, the short, but impressive annals of the dead, they walked an old cloister that abutted upon the Bishop's garden, and seemed abandoned to them and silence by all the world, save now and then where a solitary ecclesiastic crossed their path, in his habit, proceeding on the little business of the church, between the Bishop and the Chapter.

"This is indeed," said Evelyn,

'The studious cloisters pale;'

"And impressive enough," added he, looking at an immense crucifix, which had lately been erected in a point where two cloisters met, and together with an abundance of painted glass, whose rich tints blazed in a deep glow of colouring, from the mid-day sun, gave a solemn magnificence to the place, even in the eyes of a Protestant divine. At that moment, one of the ecclesiastics above mentioned passing through, crossed himself with great reverence, bowing low as he passed the crucifix.

"I am not surprised," said Tremaine, "at this ostentation; and I should conceive, though the reverence inspired is evidently artificial, yet, as the object is to create habitual reverence among ignorant people, it is not without its use."

A young girl, who could not be above eighteen, and of the lower order, but decent and serious in her appearance, now approached the crucifix, and passing into a little inclosed niche, that had the look of a shrine, threw herself with fervour on her knees, and with clasped hands and downcast eyes, from which tears at last fell, ejaculated several prayers to herself, in great and evidently sincere emotion.

"Some penance," observed Evelyn; and the two friends, respecting her condition, moved from her. Returning, they found her retiring with something like composure, after having performed this imposed or voluntary duty, whatever it might be.

"This does not seem artificial," observed Evelyn.

"Certainly not; that poor girl is all the better for her devotions, from her confidence in their efficacy," said Tremaine.

"She thinks her prayers have been heard," remarked Evelyn.

"Undoubtedly! and this is a happy sight."

"That you should at length think so!" said Evelyn, considerably moved.

"I have long thought so," rejoined his friend, "long (for why should I disguise it?) felt all that sympathy which you once so memorably explained to me, and felt, too, that the devotion of sympathy is not unreal because it is sympathetic."

"My dear Tremaine," cried the Doctor, pressing his hand, "these are joyful tidings to me. But why, (for I must in all kindness reproach you) why have you concealed this so long from those who would have been so gladdened by hearing it?"

"You know not how far I can go, or where stop short," replied Tremaine: "I know not myself the extent of my own progress to what I would fain think, and yet cannot be convinced, is truth. I am not what I was—I even detest my former blindness, my hardness of heart. But even now I am little sure; I am indeed still full of doubts; and were this a proper place and time, I

would immediately open to you this too interesting, too saddening field of thought. At any rate, the time seems come for confessions, far other than those of the poor girl who has just left us. I have, however, been restrained from this and everything, by doubts of another nature."

"I beseech you explain," said Evelyn.

"Briefly then, I suspected my own motives might not be so sincere as yet they must be, before even the Heaven I aim at here below should be mine, if really I could gain it. . . . . .

"And this," added he, after a pause, "is one, the strongest reason, for my thinking myself not yet in a condition to make the very few communications I have for you."

"Still, and always honourable," exclaimed Evelyn, fervently; "but I beseech you explain even here (and I know no place more appropriate out of our own England), explain here and at once to what point you have attained, and what is still in doubt."

"Alas!" returned Tremaine, "I have the misery of not knowing, as far as reasoning and principles are concerned, whether I have gained anything. But honestly can I aver, that the *feeling of religion*, which I had so long allowed to be stifled in me, because, as I thought, not supported by reason — this feeling has returned, and I own deliciously. It has often expanded my very heart."

"It is worth a universe," cried Evelyn, "and transcends all the philosophising and all the systems that ever drove poor reason mad. For, say what the most orthodox may, of the proofs from argument and controversy, one spark of genuine pious gratitude and reverence to God the Creator and dispenser of all good, one spark of this, arising in the heart, *as a mere feeling*, without a proof beside, is worth a thousand-fold more than the most perfect cold conviction that any metaphysician could be satisfied with."

"Is that your creed?" asked Tremaine.

"It is. I have always held it, always clung to it, and think the poor Indian who

'Sees God in clouds, and hears him in the wind'

Happier than he, who arrives at the same truth after the most refined and happy deductions of reasoning."

Tremaine paused a few minutes, then observed, "I believe, nay, I am sure you are right as to the effect. The feeling was once mine, but in early, very early youth. It was reasoning, reasoning that could not satisfy me, but brought all into doubt; it was this that deprived me so long of this precious feeling."

"But it is restored!" exclaimed Evelyn.

"It is, in a degree; nor can I ever now contemplate the face of happy nature, under whatever form it may come before me, whether animate or inanimate, without feeling, and delightfully too, the beauties and beneficence of its author. But though I do not, as formerly, overwhelm myself with unfathomable calculations upon his design, or upon our place in the order of things, I am still tormented by the inextricable difficulties drawn from the existence of evil, and the seeming want of a moral Providence. But my religion would be one of obedience, resignation and gratitude, were there no other."

"Good!" said Evelyn; "but may we not add also, one of confidence and hope hereafter."

"I wish I could say so," answered Tremaine; "but to this, alas! I have not advanced. The theories, indeed, of Democritus, Lucretius, and Spinoza, Hobbes, and all the Academics, were never *very* influential in making my mind the sea of doubt it sometimes has been, even as to the universe; for they tread on atheism—from which I have been always exempt. But though exempt, as to the existence and general power of a Creator, they have puzzled me sometimes as to particulars even in physics, until I found it necessary to begin anew with the new philosophy; and glad I am to say that the fallacies of Lucretius and Des Cartes have completely melted away before the warm sun of Newton, and his illustrious school. Safely, therefore, I can assert, that I am as

alive as you would have me, in regard to the existence and power of God—to the glowing imagery of your beautiful psalm:—

'Whither shall I go then, from thy presence?
'If I climb up into heaven, thou art there; if I go down to hell, thou art there also.'"

"This is as I would have it," said Evelyn.

"But truth compels me to confess," added Tremaine, "that I am not yet able to go on with this too flattering, too soothing, as well as beautiful language:—

'If I take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea,
'*Even there also shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*'"

"Alas!" said Evelyn, "how much is my hope cast down. You believe not yet, then, that the hand of Providence leads us?"

"I do not say so," answered Tremaine. "I say, rather, that I believe in it most entirely in the natural world, but am not so confident as to the moral. But even were I as fully persuaded of His perpetual and obvious interference, as the Jews themselves were throughout their history, shall I own to you another rock against which I have long been beating myself? Providence, as to this world, by no means implies the existence of another, but rather the contrary; and all my doubts as to the nature of the soul, or as to materialism and immaterialism, would by no means be relieved, even were my difficulties, as to the moral government of the world, completely cleared up."

"We are in a sad wide sea indeed," said Evelyn, mournfully: "how different is this from your opening!"

"Do not, however, misunderstand me," returned Tremaine. "Though my doubts are by no means settled, meditation and study, and guides whom I had but too much slighted, have let in much light upon a mind, not only dark in itself, but dark from its own wilfulness. To have unsettled wrong, is surely a step, and not an inconsiderable one, towards settling right. Above all, it

is not to you I need say that these very difficulties are themselves one of the foundations of revelation."

"My dear friend," cried Evelyn, in a tone of joy amounting to elation, "if you have advanced thus far, great indeed has been your progress. May God bless the work!"

"Stop," interrupted Tremaine, "nor misconstrue me on the other side. The darkness I was in, and which, though less gloomy, I still want your help to dispel for ever, was so thick, so impenetrable, that no revelation could pierce it. It rendered all effort useless, because, while it existed, it was inconsistent with the truths which you say come from God. Now, all of you agree that even the omnipotence of God is not equal to establish a contradiction."

"Undoubtedly," said Evelyn.

"Then to me, revelation once appeared a contradiction to what I believed, both with respect to Providence, and to the soul. I have allowed I am much shaken: help me finally to destroy my opinions, by relieving me from my doubts, and I will promise you that revelation itself, being then no longer a contradiction, will be no longer the difficulty."

"Too candid to be long unfortunate," said Evelyn: "how am I to understand this last intimation?"

"In the language of one of your wisest supporters," replied Tremaine; "in language which I have got by heart; although, lest I should ever fail in remembering a word of it, it is here in my tablets."

So saying, he read from his memoranda, the introductory passages to Paley's Evidences.

"Suppose the world we live in to have had a Creator; suppose it to appear from the predominant aim and tendency of the provisions and contrivances observable in the universe, that the Deity, when he formed it, consulted for the happiness of his sensitive creation; suppose the disposition, which dictated this council, to continue; suppose a part of the creation to have received faculties from their Maker, by which they are capable of rendering a moral obedience to his will, and of volun-

tarily pursuing any end for which he has designed them; suppose the Creator to intend for these, his rational and accountable agents, a second state of existence, in which their situation will be regulated by their behaviour in the first state (by which supposition, and by no other, the objection to the divine government, in not putting a difference between the good and the bad, and the inconsistency of this confusion with the care and benevolence discoverable in the works of the Deity, is done away); suppose it to be of the utmost importance to the subjects of this dispensation to know what is intended for them; that is, suppose the knowledge of it to be highly conducive to the happiness of the species—a purpose which so many provisions of nature are calculated to promote; suppose, nevertheless, almost the whole race, either by the imperfection of their faculties, the misfortune of their situation, or by the loss of some prior revelation, to want this knowledge, and not to be likely, without the aid of a new revelation, to attain it:—under these circumstances, is it improbable that a revelation should be made? Is it incredible that God should interpose for such a purpose? Suppose him to design for mankind a future state, is it unlikely that he should acquaint them with it?"

"I remember these important *principia* full well," said Evelyn.

"To every word of these *consequences* I subscribe," continued Tremaine; "but to go along with the immensity of the suppositions, is at present beyond me. Once prove that they are to be made out by reason, nay, that reason does not even contradict many of them, and I can feel no obstinacy on revelation itself."

Evelyn could by no means suppress his joy. He shook hands with Tremaine again and again, and would have embraced him, but that he was withheld by his fear of a scene.

At length, breaking silence, he exlaimed—

"Be assured, my good friend, you are not far from the kingdom of God. For, if all that keeps you from revelation is its supposed incompatibility with any rational

belief or disbelief in natural religion, I pledge myself (with your prejudices joyfully beaten down, as you say they are by your own efforts), to satisfy you that no such incompatibility ever did, or ever can subsist. Shall we proceed now?"

"I think not," said Tremaine. "Our time presses; you will be missed at home; and I am, besides, too much moved with this whole *rencontre* of ours, to recal my scattered thoughts. I cannot do justice to my former masters, nor marshal my objections fairly. Let us seek again our beautiful river, or visit the meadows about this place. I will show you where the great Guise fell, as so many other great men have fallen, by the hand of an assassin."

CHAPTER XXXI.

NATURAL IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

> My soul! What can it do to that?
> Being a thing immortal as itself!
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

The Château de St. Jules has been in part described; but we scarcely mentioned the gallery, into which the turret where Tremaine had fixed his study opened, as we said, by a little staircase. This gallery was sixty or seventy feet long, ranging itself on the side of the Loire, which its high narrow windows commanded in beautiful perspective. It was almost the only apartment of the house which had anything like furniture, for it was matted, and had a few high backed chairs with twisted rails, and on the walls hung several portraits of statesmen, warriors, and philosophers, of the seventeenth century. Among these, though chiefly of the court of Louis XIV., was Newton.

True to his appointment, an hour had not passed after breakfast, before Evelyn left his daughter once more, in

search, as he said, of a proper boat to be hired at Orleans, in order to give her the pleasure of the water excursion he had enjoyed the day before, and which he had described with not more feeling than truth. If, considering his motives for concealment, not to reveal the *whole* of his design was a crime, the Doctor was guilty; for it is certain he thought not of going to Orleans, till he had seen and conversed again with his friend.

They took several turns in the gallery before either of them began—not from being unprepared, but from being too full of their subject. In the course of the perambulation, Evelyn was struck, every time he came to the end of the gallery, with the portrait of his countryman, that has been mentioned—the finding of which, so unexpectedly, and among such a number of Frenchmen, seemed more remarkable than it really was.

"I cannot," said Evelyn, "look at this representation of surely the greatest intellect that ever belonged to a mortal, and reflect that that intellect only made him more fixed and firm in his belief; I cannot do this without reflecting more deeply on the case of those who are tossed in doubt till they are wrecked, merely because they disdain a pilot."

"I at least am not one of those," observed Tremaine —"and if I have now no pilot (unless it be yourself), it is only because those I have followed have proved unequal to what they have undertaken."

"My dear friend, will you tell me whom you have followed?"

Tremaine hesitated, and at length observed, "I mean not any one in particular; but with a mind teeming with objections, when I came to consult them, none could give me the satisfaction I required."

"Perhaps you required too much," said Evelyn.

"I think not," answered Tremaine—"I required only truth."

"What is truth?"—remarked Evelyn, "was once asked with fearful curiosity, if not with reverence, on a much more awful occasion. *We*, at least, will not be so cruelly and criminally indifferent to it afterwards, as he

who asked it proved to be: and we will not with him, *wash our hands*, and by that act think we may leave the world to its horrors."

"But even Pilate," rejoined Tremaine, "was anxious....."

"He cared not to inquire," interrupted Evelyn: "truth came not of its own accord; and finding it troublesome to pursue it, he plunged into sin and blood, from mere indolency and weakness of character. How many, alas! are of the same complexion among us."

"Again I say, I am not one of them," said Tremaine.

"Of that I am sure," answered Evelyn; "you are too good. But will you tell me your difficulties with precision, that I may try to answer them? Is the truth you require, certainty, equal to mathematical? or will strong probability content you?"

"*In generalibus versatur error*," observed Tremaine. "How much is left in miserable doubt, or absolutely lost, under that specious but doubtful *strong probability!*"

"And yet," said Evelyn, "the whole business of the world, all that impels the heart and activity of man; that upon which he will every day risk his all, nay his life, has no surer foundation."

"You mean then," said Tremaine, rather eagerly, "that the obligations of virtue and morals are merely strong probabilities!"

"As compared with the mathematical truth you require, and distinct from one other thing, I do," answered Evelyn.

"That other thing?" asked Tremaine.

"Christianity," pursued his friend; "the only thing I know which can stand in the place of your mathematical truth. Whoever *believes*, has an authority in morals at least as high as the demonstration of the geometrician."

"This I have conceded," said Tremaine.

"We are, however, not yet ripe enough for this part of our subject," answered Evelyn. "I wish to discuss the religion of nature, before that of revelation; nor do I at all mean to cicatrise your doubts with mere authority, and leave you floating in uncertainty, before you are a

believer. All I intend to say is, that among those who believe, the authority of Christianity in morals is *the* thing which answers to mathematical demonstration in geometry. Nevertheless, even without Christianity, I contend that the strong probabilities I have mentioned, are so fearfully convincing to the mind and heart of man, that he is a bold one who doubts; much more who lets his doubts so get hold of him, as to influence his conduct as if he had arrived at certainty on the other side."

"That, again, as I have said, is not my case," observed Tremaine; "but I wish to know how you apply this to a future state?"

"Why thus:—that there are ten thousand arguments for it, *and not one against it!*" cried Evelyn.

"Oh! that of your ten thousand there were but *one* certain and demonstrable!"

"What would content you?"

"The return of one, even of but one, who had lived in the other world."

"Christ alone is that person," answered Evelyn; "and for this, I agree our argument is not ripe. But on my side, let me ask the reason for doubt?"

"Why this, if nothing else; and I am willing to allow I have little else: the total destruction, annihilation, and disappearance of everything belonging to us. That is *positive* on the one side; while on the other, not a vestige beyond conjecture, (how pleasing or beautiful soever that dear illusive field!) that anything lives again. Take the most exquisite work of art—the Jupiter of Phidias. It seems to live, to breathe; fire is in its eye: intellect and dignity on its brow; we acknowledge the father of Gods and men, we worship, we adore! Suppose, for a moment, this statue hollowed out, and filled with an extraordinary mechanism of clockwork. It begins to move; it nods; it thunders; it may even be made to produce death. It stalks with dignity round a given space; and, for a time, the ignorant believe it to be what it appears. But of a sudden, it stops; the moving power is at an end; its faculties are lost. A barbarian seizes and dashes it to pieces. It is crumbled and

reduced to powder, it can no more return to the marble whence it came, but is mixed with ignominious mud, and can be even traced no longer. I know this statue had not real life; but barring the blood and breathing, the vision and hearing, of our bodies, (which are all mere modes of matter, even as this divine work of Phidias was,) what difference, when they come to be destroyed by death, or the hand of the barbarian, seems there to be between the statue and the man? the last appears a mere machine as well as the first; more nicely put together, indeed; more exquisitely contrived; with a more wonderful apparatus in the senses, and leading therefore to more powerful effects; but all of them to be accounted for by the operation of these senses, which you yourself, I imagine, will not deny to be simple matter. I ask the end and finish of all, when these senses decay, and the life-blood is out? The machine of the man, like the machine of the statue, equally falls to pieces, and is trodden into dust. Hence, with Lucretius, may we not say—

> Nunc quoniam quassatis undique vasis,
> Diffluere humorem et laticem discedere cernis,
> Crede animam quoque diffundi.

"In short, the excellent warm motion has become a kneaded clod; and the issue of all seems to be,

> To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot."

Tremaine here paused, seemingly moved with his own account of himself. "You put this well," said Evelyn, "and I beseech you to proceed."

"I have little more to add," said Tremaine, "but that, after the most anxious investigation I am able to make of our intellectual powers, and all I have read of the nature of thought, I cannot convince myself that it is not what Lucretius and others have fancied it—a very subtle, and very wonderful effect, for a given time, of the nice and extraordinary adaption of parts in the wonderful machine: in the same manner, though not in the same degree, and by no means in the same manner to be discovered, as the machine of clockwork I have supposed.

But both are broken to pieces; I see all the fragments before me; I can put almost all together again, or at least account for those which I cannot. Who then, shall tell me that one of these machines is to live again, and not the other? Or who shall say there is nothing in the clockwork, (because we cannot see that there is,) which will either continue to live itself, or make that work live again; and yet there is something in the man which is to produce all this effect, although, any more than in the clockwork, no one has ever seen it, will see it, or can see it?"

"Again, I say," observed Evelyn, "you put this matter exceedingly well; Voltaire himself would have been obliged to you. You beat him all to nothing with his bellows and its clapper, which, he says, is its soul."

"Whatever I may once have thought, I have long felt that to be a very foolish sally," said Tremaine.

"Not so foolish for his profligate purpose," answered Evelyn, "which was to sap by ridicule and disrespect what he could not beat down by argument. And yet, as an argument, though your image is the nobler, his (excuse me) is at least as convincing."

"I meant it as a mere illustration," said Tremaine, "to show, that if one machine was destroyed, and confessedly could not be restored, so must it be with the other. But I shall rejoice if you can show my supposition to be a fallacy."

"Voltaire meant no more than you," replied Evelyn, "and both of you are open to this answer,—you both take for granted, that the mind of man, as well as his body, is a machine."

"It is even so," said Tremaine. "Everything I see, everything I know, is lost and closed in death. Without revelation, (to which, as you say, we have not yet come, and I agree it is better for the argument, that we should keep it for its own place,) who ever heard of the other world, except in the fond fancies of poets and philosophers? Who ever visited it, who ever knew that any one was carried to it, much less returned from it, or was

brought to judgment before its tribunals? Who ever saw or felt either Heaven or Hell?—But as, like children in the dark, we generally fear what we are uncertain about, and this fear is at least a convenient instrument for our nurses, and afterwards for our governors, can I think that sentiment either very foolish or very impious, which has caused so much altercation on both sides—

"Primus in orbe Deos fecit timor*?"

"Let us take you upon your own supposition," answered Evelyn, "and see, practically, to what this would amount."

"I desire nothing better," said Tremaine.

"Suppose a ship were periodically to arrive from some far off and unknown country; that a band of armed men should land from it without opposition; should call upon all the chiefs and rulers of the place, and like the famous Cretan ship of old, should demand from them a certain number of victims, which should be obediently supplied to them; suppose the armed men themselves should point out these victims, at their will and pleasure, without any known rule or principle,—seizing upon the young, the gay, and the happy, the innocent infant, or the blooming bride; and although the most bitter grief and lamentation possessed everybody, no one had ever the thought, much less the power, of resisting the demand; on the contrary, that all should submit to it in silent awe. Suppose, farther, that these victims, once embarked, were never known to return, so that every one was utterly ignorant of their fate; but that the ship regularly returned for more, until all the inhabitants of the place were carried off, and new generations succeeded to await the same fate."

"Your supposition is awful enough," cried Tremaine; "and it is evident, that by your ship you mean death."

"I do," said Evelyn; "and I ask you, or any thinking man, whether you could possibly behold this regular arrival and regular departure with indifference?"

"I could not," answered Tremaine.

* It was fear that first produced gods.

"I ask you further," continued Evelyn, "whether you could possibly refrain from wondering whence this ship came, or whither she returned? Or if any thoughtless, or even thoughtful man were to say, she came from no place, and returned to no place; and because you could not tell what became of the victims, that therefore nothing became of them; would you be satisfied with this, and set the whole matter at rest, as if the ship had never come, or never would come again?"

"I should not," replied Tremaine.

"You will observe," pursued Evelyn, "I say nothing of the influence of this periodical visit upon conduct, but merely upon opinion. You would then, probably, speculate upon the destination of this ship, and not easily believe those who said she had no destination at all."

"It is natural so to suppose," said Tremaine.

"And if," asked Evelyn, "during one or two visits, the head of this armed band were to point his dart at you, or to throw his eyes over you, as if examining whether you might not be a proper addition to the next cargo of victims;—if, indeed, he were to tell you in terms, to prepare, for that your turn would be next....."

"What then?" said Tremaine.

"Why, then, your curiosity and speculation would probably increase; and you would not deem it satisfactory to be told by any of your friends, however sincere in their opinions, that it ought not to concern you, except in so far as that it took you from your family, and the good things you were enjoying; for as nothing ever was known of the fate of these victims that had gone before you, it was presumable they had no fate at all. Would this be a reasonable supposition?" asked Evelyn.

Tremaine owned it would not.

"But what," continued the Doctor, "if you were told, (still upon no evidence but a presumption, and that a capricious one,) that at best they all fell asleep, never again to wake? Once more, I ask, if this would satisfy, would make you indifferent as to what was to happen to you when your turn came to obey the summons?"

"I allow it would not," answered Tremaine; "yet, I

think, there is this fallacy in your illustration:—We see the ship sail away, and you suppose these victims carried off alive; whereas, in death, we see no being whatever carried off, and the poor remnants of mortality still remain, mouldering to nothing, or actually mixing into other substances before our eyes. Thus, death is a mere privation, a negation, as it were, of the powers we see in the body during life; but the body itself remains, and we know what becomes of it. How does this tally with *your* supposition, under which the body (that is the victim) disappears at the same moment with the powers of life?"

"I understand you," said Evelyn: "and your observation requires the fullest answer. Perhaps you will be surprised if I say, that, for all that, mine is the true picture, yours the fallacious one. Most true it is, in mine I have supposed, for the sake of illustration, the mortal part to be carried off in my ship, in the same manner as all authors, sacred and profane, all prophets, poets, painters, and every mind warmed with genius, have imagined the mere *negation* death, to be an actual person, a king crowned with terrors. But it is evident, that by the persons of my victims, I mean the soul, which, being invisible, intangible, and, in short, imperceptible to sense, it is impossible to demonstrate, to that sense at least, what may be its fate."

"In your illustration, then," observed Tremaine, "your visible being is put for an invisible one."

"It is," answered Evelyn; "and, as I contend, it sufficiently refutes the charge, that the illustration itself is fallacious."

"Mine is, at least, the simpler," rejoined Tremaine; "it rests itself upon the absolute demonstration of the senses, while yours is conjecture only. To conjecture, mine can never be subject: its material nature, its *oneness* (if I may so call it), protects it from that."

"Be not too sure," observed Evelyn, pointedly.

Tremaine looked surprised.

"I have said," continued his friend, "yours was the fallacious picture; and it is so in this,—that you

assume, in respect to the clockwork you have supposed, that the whole of it is material, and obvious to sense, as you have charged me with having supposed the soul."

"And is it not so?"

"No! for you forgot the most important part of it, the *primum mobile* that sets it going."

"Not so," answered Tremaine, with eagerness. "I know that it goes not of itself, and must have a weight, or spring, or some great mechanical power, to give it its impetus; but all this experiences the same palpable destruction with the rest of the machine,"

"Aye; but what gives impetus to the mechanical power itself?" asked Evelyn, folding his arms, and fixing his eyes in scrutiny upon his friend. Tremaine hesitated.

"Pursue this," continued Evelyn, "and you will find that even in your material machine, something immaterial, but of amazing force, something quite as unobvious to sense as the soul, and only, like the soul, to be known by its effects, must cause, in reality, every one of its operations. Your weight is nothing but the attraction of gravity; your spring, the attraction of cohesion; yet, whence these are, or how they operate, no man that ever lived, or probably ever will live, can tell."

Tremaine was obviously struck.

"You will at least not say," pursued Evelyn, "that these attractions, even if *material*, are visible, or tangible, or perceptible to sense. You cannot, therefore, include them among the fragments which you say you see mouldering to nothing, or actually mixing into other substances before your eyes."

Tremaine owned he had not considered this, and that the argument was of the greatest consequence against his own conclusions. "Still, however," added he, "that they irrefragably support yours, I do not see."

"I reason upon it thus," said Evelyn. "In the human frame, as in your clockwork, more is necessary to cause its action than what is obvious to sense. In your illustration, it is the attractions you have supposed; under mine, it is thought, volition, mind—in short, the soul.

Even in yours, the destruction of the machine does not, as you at first supposed, *demonstrate* the destruction of the moving power; mine, therefore, may remain (at least it is open to proof that it may so remain), after it has ceased to act in the body. It is departed, but whither, no one knows, any more than whence it came, how it came, or in what manner its union with the body is formed. You tell me it is material. *Great part* of your clockwork certainly is so; but, if material, should we not see it upon the breaking up of the machine, in the same manner as you say we do the clockwork? Or if we see only the wheels, the organisation of the clockwork, and not the real power that gives it motion, may it not so be with that mysterious union of soul and body, constituting the human being?"

Tremaine paused for a minute, when, rallying, he continued—

"After all, may we not suppose life to be merely that configuration, that organisation of matter, which fits it exactly to be acted upon, in the way it is, by the different attractions, fermentations, and whatever it is that first produces motion? and that when this organisation is worn out or interrupted, the aptitude to receive this motion ceasing, life is at an end?"

"This is not absolutely impossible," returned Evelyn; "but, from your own hypothesis, whatever the adaptation of the parts, the power originally giving the motion is, you see, immaterial. But even if it were material, how can any adaptation, configuration, or organisation of mere matter, account for thought, will, judgment, and, above all, consciousness?"

"And why not?" asked Tremaine.

"Because," said Evelyn, "it is a rule in physics, applicable to all matter, as you well know, that no configuration, or, if you prefer it, *organisation*, can produce anything not originally in the things themselves that are organised. It may, indeed, alter their form, but all it can do is to give it a different appearance, and produce a different degree of effect, when combined and organised, from what it had in its simple state, before the combina-

tion was made. Thus figure will produce figure still, when combined with figure, though different from what it was before; but it will produce nothing else, save only figure. Motion will produce only motion; colour, colour; smell, smell; but all the combinations you can imagine of figure, motion, colour, and smell, can only produce a new machine, in which there can be no absolutely *new quality* that was not there before. There may be a *different* figure, motion, colour, and smell, and that is all. The new organisation will not, for example, produce taste or sapidity, if there was nothing sapid in any of the ingredients (latent, indeed, but) capable of being excited by motion. I need not to you add, that an organ is a mere instrument, and that organisation, however great a word, is, in reality, nothing but an ordering or placing of instruments. Show me that any combination of instruments, however ingenious, can produce motion, without any impulse imparted to it—for example, that the great Apollonicon in London can produce a single sound, much more the wonderful concert of sounds it *is made* to produce, *without a player*, or some agent to give it a first impetus, and I will yield to the power of the specious words you have used;—but not till then."

Tremaine paused much upon this.

"Do I convince you," said Evelyn, "or are you prepared to show that my philosophy is incorrect."

His friend said he was not; at least not then.

"Then neither is my illustration of the ship and the victims incorrect," pursued Evelyn. "For see where we are. You said it was fallacious, because I supposed that we *saw* them carried off, whereas in death we see them remain. Now, I think I have proved to you the fallacy is yours, because you suppose you saw the soul remain, which you do not."

"Still you imagine it carried off in your sight," answered Tremaine; "which, as you at least never saw the soul, you will not say you do."

"I do not," said Evelyn; "but its effects disappear on the dissolution of the body; and though there is every reason to be convinced it is distinct from the body, we

know not its fate. If it shock you, therefore, to suppose that it is actually carried off, I will content myself with supposing that it merely disappears, or to favour your feeling still more, that it is lost, when its effects are no longer produced. Now, what should we say, if merely the body disappeared upon being touched by the lance of my armed messenger, and we were ever after left ignorant what became of it?"

"It would be a most awful event," said Tremaine.

"Well, then, proving, as I again think I have, that the animating power of the body is in this condition," observed Evelyn, "is not my illustration to be admitted, and is not the soul in the same situation I have supposed—namely, that of a victim to a periodical visit, carried off, at least we know not whither, and of whose annihilation we have at least no proof?"

"You have made this out better than I expected," said Tremaine.

"You rejoice me," said Evelyn, "and now, if you please, we will go back to our ship."

"Not yet," replied Tremaine, after a pause—"for as to this volition, thought, judgment, and even consciousness itself—in short, all that you call the soul—where were they ever known, after all, but in the body? and in the body, but through the senses? without which we should have no ideas, nor anything for thought or volition to work upon."

"Granting that supposition," answered Evelyn, "your intended conclusion is far from conclusive; because nothing is more distinct than a power of working, and the tools with which it works. I suppose I need not ask whether, if you destroy the tools, you destroy the power also? The eye, for example: let it be quenched: would you, therefore, say the power, whatever it is, which used to perceive through it, has also perished? As well might you say you had lost your power of seeing, because, when darkness supervenes, you cannot see. Still, however, you would say, that all this is material, or according to the old atheistical, or at best sceptical doctrine, that matter thinks."

"In the course of the argument, and with a view to an answer, I should," said Tremaine.

"Why, then the tools of this material thought, as ideas and memory, must be material too."

"Certainly," allowed Tremaine.

"Let me look at your head," said Evelyn. "'Tis a very little head; a very small piece of matter, indeed, to contain the number and the size of the ideas of which those of so accomplished a man must be composed. If ideas are actually material, where have you room in the brain for the idea of the world, for example, together with all its stupendous train of attendant reflections*?"

"I am not exactly prepared for this," observed Tremaine.

"Nor any one else, I assure you," answered Evelyn, "for never did I know it got over, any more than those millions of operations which compose what is called ratiocination, or rather ideas."

"As how?" asked Tremaine.

"Take the easiest," rejoined his friend.—"I see two, and two more, of any given material thing; the first two, and the second two, are objects of sense, and the mind possesses itself of them *through* the sense. Having got them, it retires within itself, and, by reflection, acquires a new idea, namely, that two are equal to two, or the idea of equality. Was this an object of sense, or acquired by the mind's own operation, employed originally, indeed, on sensible objects, but coming to this conclusion through something of its own?—Again—how do you arrive at the idea of a quality, benevolence for example, except by internal reflection? The things, indeed, upon which it is employed, you may have seen; the power by which you reflect, you cannot see."

"Your inference," said Tremaine.

"That mind is distinct from matter; that you have never seen it, heard it, touched it, tasted it; yet it exists; and you at least know not that it dies merely because

* On this subject, see the excellent Treatises on the Nature of the Soul, by Rotheram, Colliber, and Baxter.

you see the poor machine, through which it operated (as the eye does through a telescope), lying and rotting in this 'cold obstruction.' For aught you know, therefore, it is no more annihilated than the eye itself, because the glass with which it was wont to see is dashed to pieces."

"This is calling upon us for a negative proof," answered Tremaine; "no man can prove a negative."

"And yet you have assumed it as positive," returned Evelyn: "you have taken it for granted that it *does* die with the body, when you give the destruction of the one as a proof of the destruction of the other. I am not at present assuming that it lives, but merely answering your supposition, that because the body through which it operated dies, and the effects of the mind disappear, the mind itself is therefore dead. This is no more true, than that because a man disappears, he must therefore be killed."

Tremaine faltered, which Evelyn perceiving, added, "You have of course considered, and are prepared to refute, the great argument founded upon the extension and impenetrability of matter; that is, you are prepared to prove that thought, like all other matter, has length, breadth, and thickness, and that one thought cannot succeed another thought in the mind (or, according to you, the material brain). without actually making it retire and taking its place. You will also be prepared to say into what corner of space the displaced thought actually retires."

Tremaine continued for some time silent, and at length confessed that the argument drawn from the extension and impenetrability of matter was what, in his most sceptical days, he never could answer, much less now. "It was pride alone," said he, "and a different temper of mind, that kept me from giving it its due weight. It is long, however, since this temper has left me."

"You rejoice me," cried Evelyn; "may I now therefore go back to my ship?"

"You may at least proceed," said Tremaine.

"In my turn," replied Evelyn, "I say, not yet; for I wish to pursue this matter. Tell me, if the mind be

material, and its operations nothing but matter acting upon matter, must not these operations be governed by the same laws which govern all other operations of matter?"

"I once thought otherwise," said Tremaine, "but I am now free to say that probably they must."

"The laws of motion, for example," continued Evelyn, "discovered and established by experiment by Sir Isaac Newton, and afterwards brought to their present wonderful perfection by succeeding philosophers."

"I know not your aim, exactly," said Tremaine.

"What I mean is, must not all these operations of matter be, like other operations, mechanical?"

"That has been my fear and my doubt," answered Tremaine.

"Why then," said Evelyn, "show me why what we call the laws of mechanics must not apply to our mental operations, as well as to all the subjects of natural philosophy, which are daily pursued with such exactness of calculation, as to be within the compass of a schoolboy's knowledge?"

"Explain a little more," said Tremaine.

"No more than this; that if the action and reaction between mind and its ideas are mere matter acting upon matter, the whole would be a subject of mathematical calculation; the effects regular, certain, and invariable: and our great friend here (pointing to the picture of Newton) would have discovered the laws of action between body and mind, with as much precision as he did the laws of motion."

Tremaine owned this was new to him, and begged his friend would proceed.

"The very subject of motion itself furnishes, perhaps, the most conclusive argument of all."

"I know your meaning," said Tremaine, "you would tell me matter cannot move itself, and therefore spirit must."

"I would, indeed," said Evelyn, "and I shall be surprised to discover how you resist the argument."

"It is not that I do not think it ingenious, nay

powerful," rejoined Tremaine; "but though difficult to conceive how matter can move itself, it is not difficult, once finding motion in the world, to imagine how it may be made to change its direction according as the necessity and laws of our being require."

"And who, and what is to effect this change of direction, according as a *law* may require it? I need not ask you if matter, brute unintelligent matter, can do this?"

"And why not?" asked Tremaine. "Once set matter in motion, and who shall say in what direction it may not fall?"

"You reduce this directing, this law-giving power, then, to chance. Now a law is not chance; but producing a regular effect from the preconceived design which created the law, must be the absolute contrary of chance."

"I own this seems true," said Tremaine.

"Then," pursued Evelyn, "there must be at least as much of intelligence and design, as well as of force distinct from matter, to give its motion a direction which it cannot give itself, as to produce the original motion, which it could not produce itself."

"This possibly may also be true," said Tremaine.

"Then what is it among men that gives this direction? What but the will, proceeding from thought, contrivance, design—in a word, the mind; and hence the great position, that mind, as it governs, so it is distinct from matter."

"I am pleased with your precision," observed Tremaine, after musing some time. "Yet I remember Voltaire ——"

"Then excuse me if I say," interrupted Evelyn, "that you remember a dunce—to say the most charitable thing I can of him. At least if he was *not* the greatest of all dunces in philosophy, he was the wickedest of all men. I fear the brilliancy of his parts decides to which class he belongs. I remember too, when reverting to this subject, he tells you, that if the soul say to the feet, walk, and the feet have the gout, they will not obey.

Hence he would infer, that the soul, or will, has nothing to do with motion*."

"I should like to hear his refutation," said Tremaine.

"It is in the power of a child," answered Evelyn; "for who does not see that an argument which supposes any given instrument, must suppose it at least what it calls it, an *instrument;* and that, in reply, to suppose it *not* an instrument, is a despicable quibble. Here, the feet first supposed are instruments of walking. In reply, they are supposed not instruments of walking. Can we be stopt with such trash as this?"

Tremaine felt a little overborne.

"Leaving the subject of motion," proceeded Evelyn, "though we have the most irrefragable proof that it must proceed from some other substance than matter, and therefore that what it does proceed from must be immaterial—let me ask you if you have made out the problem that has puzzled every divine, physician, and moral and natural philosopher, since the world began?"

"Of course not," said Tremaine, "if these have failed. But your problem?"

"How is it that the soul perceives?"

"Certainly through the senses," answered Tremaine; "nor do I believe a word of the fine romance of Plato, adopted, or at least not denied, by some modern divines (the elder Sherlock, I think, among them,) that many ideas are the soul's reminiscences from another state. I tell you fairly, I am an enemy to all the philosophy of innate ideas; and if you are going to uphold them, we never shall agree."

"It is not necessary that I should," answered Evelyn; "for without giving any opinion on Plato, or Sherlock, I am inclined to agree with Locke, and of course with you. But even your opinion can only amount to this, that the soul can only perceive through the help of the senses. How it perceives *with* that help, I should be glad if you will tell me."

* Dict. Philos. *Ame.*

"I cannot," said Tremaine; "but in seeing, there is a picture formed on the retina of the eye."

"So there is on a looking glass, or that lovely river we have been admiring," observed Evelyn, "but I suppose I need not ask you whether the glass or the river itself sees?"

"Certainly not," said Tremaine.

"Still then, I would ask," continued his friend, "how it is that the mind sees?"

"Nobody can tell that," answered Tremaine; "yet Lucretius talks of the finer distilled spirits of the brain, the '*Flos Bacchi, et spiritus unguenti suavis*,' that is, or may be, the seat of thought."

"It is your candour that has added the '*may be*,' for the Heathen positively asserts it is so," replied Evelyn. "May I ask if he has proved it to your satisfaction?"

"Assuredly not; yet I wish to see what there is against it."

"Everything," pursued Evelyn; "for I think I could demonstrate its impossibility."

"Oh, if you could! but how?"

"From the very nature of thought itself, which must be indivisible, and therefore indiscerptible, therefore incorruptible, therefore immortal."

Tremaine was again much struck; meantime Evelyn corrected himself. "I mean not," said he, "immortal, in regard to the power of the Almighty, but merely as applicable to those notions of the nature of matter and spirit, which our poor capacity is able to acquire; by which, in point of fact, we judge of the corruptibility of matter, and by which alone, therefore, we are guiding ourselves at this moment in our inquiry."

He paused for a while, when Tremaine, who was in deep attention, entreated him to proceed.

"I mean," pursued Evelyn, "not that the soul may not be, or is not annihilated, if that is what seems best to the Almighty wisdom; but merely in answer to what seems with you so conclusive, that it *must* die, in the same manner, and at the same moment, with the body."

"I understand you," said Tremaine.

"This indiscerptibility of thought, then," continued Evelyn, "is in truth the great argument which goes to the bottom of the proof *à priori*, as it is called, and has been so well used and defended by another great man of ours, Dr. Clarke, that I can only refer you to him, for, I think, complete satisfaction about it*."

"I beseech you to go more into detail," said Tremaine.

"Why," pursued his friend, "it is needless, I suppose, to say, that all matter whatever, whether the finer spirits of the brain, or the tree that shades our window here, is, from the very nature of it, divisible: and you, who are accomplished in natural philosophy, know that one of the first experiments in it, is to show that matter is *infinitely* divisible. You may cut the tree in halves and quarters, and so on for ever."

"You may," said Tremaine.

"But who ever imagined such a thing as to cut thought in halves?"

"I allow all the ingenuity of this," observed Tremaine.

"Is it merely ingenious?" asked the Doctor; "or are you prepared to show me that anything can break in upon it?"

"If I cannot break in upon it," said Tremaine, "I at least have not understood how it was made out; in other words, why thought should not be divisible."

"The answer is most plain and simple," replied Evelyn; "for if it is divisible like other matter, like other matter it must be extended; that is, however minute, however refined, and even though the very *flos Bacchi* of Epicurus and Lucretius, it must still have length, breadth, and thickness, or, mathematically, be a solid parallelogram; which, whether thought is or can be, I would soberly ask you?"

"I cannot answer this," said Tremaine.

"And yet, strange to say," continued Evelyn, "one of the very men you have been studying, whom, by so extraordinary an accident as it were, we see before us at

* See Clarke on the Attributes.

this instant—this great des Cartes, as he is called—owes, perhaps, most of his greatness (for certainly it is the most cogent part of his work) to the force with which he demonstrates the impossibility that thought can be matter, from the extension of the last, and the non-extension of the first. There was a contest, indeed, whether Des Cartes was original in this discovery, and others had claimed it before him; but he was the great champion of this most essential and decisive difference between them,—which in a man whose works on the whole lead to scepticism, is to me marvellous."

"I remember to have observed this," said Tremaine, "but I own I did not make the same use of it that you have done."

"Let us pursue this," continued Evelyn, "in the nature of consciousness, which is still more intimate with us than thought itself. The only knowledge we have that we think, is that we are *conscious* we are thinking. As we are not arguing for victory, I suppose you do not require me to go beyond this; if you do, I own I cannot."

"I do not require it," said Tremaine.

"Well, then! I am *conscious* that I see this wide spreading oak, with all its leaves and fruit, in exact distinctness; all its parts are individual parts; the trunk not two trunks; any particular leaf is not two leaves....."

"Your inference?"

"Why, that if consciousness were divisible, or, to speak philosophically, if it were not a monad, it might be divided like other matter, into ten thousand millions of atoms, each of them of the same family of consciousness, and therefore conscious*!"

"Your inference, still?"

"Why, that one of these two alternatives would follow—either there would be ten thousand millions of consciousnesses, each thinking that it saw the whole tree, and so there would be ten thousand millions of oaks in

* Upon this subject, see Locke on our Knowledge of the Existence of God. B. iv. ch. 10.
Also, Sherlock on a Future State.

the mind; or each of these atoms would be conscious of seeing only a particular minute part of the tree, and could not, by possibility, see the whole. Yet the whole is seen as a whole; no consciousness of a division. I ask, how this can be? how each atom can communicate its consciousness to the other, so as that all these minute consciousnesses can coalesce into one great consciousness, as the particles of that water coalesce into one great mirror?"

"You have forestalled me," said Tremaine, "for I was going to observe, this might be the very mode of accounting for your question. You perceive that in a mirror, ten thousand millions of most minute particles seem all to flow into one another, though each reflect separately only its own part of the whole object seen. May it not be so with the particles or atoms that compose the whole which we call consciousness?"

"It is, at least, an ingenious illustration," said Evelyn, "but the nature of the thing to be illustrated proves that it cannot apply. For I suppose you will allow that in consciousness, the knowledge of which we are conscious is diffused throughout the conscious power, in one entire, irrefragable, or as I have called it, indiscerptible effect. Every part of this power (supposing there to be parts,) is conscious of the *whole* effect, and not a proportionable part of it. There is no division of the thought, whatever it may be; but you have the whole idea, or none. Whereas, in the mirror, break it into ten thousand pieces, and each piece still reflects its correspondent object, part of the whole. If you throw your hat into that river, the clear sky, previously reflected by that part of it covered by the hat, will be reflected no longer, yet all the rest of the landscape remains as perfect as before. Thus, there is no diffusion of the thing reflected through *every* part of the reflector, and your phrase, that all its particles seem to *flow into one another*, is inaccurate. In truth, though very nicely and imperceptibly fitted, all in the mirror is separate and distinct. This is not so with consciousness, which is incapable of separation, and must be all or nothing."

"Yet my idea of the oak may be separated into as many parts of ideas as there are parts to the oak," said Tremaine.

"This is too like the flimsy Voltaire," rejoined Evelyn. "A mind so acute as yours must not condescend to be so blinded. If you will reflect a moment....."

"I see," cried Tremaine, "you would say that every idea, though only a part of the tree, is still in itself a perfect idea; in other words, that there can, in the mind, be no such thing as a *part* of an idea."

"Exactly so," said Evelyn.

"Bear with me, however, again, as to the divisibility of consciousness," continued Tremaine. "Behold that seat (and he pointed through the window to the garden),

'O'er canopied with luscious woodbine.'

May not the honeysuckle be compared to this consciousness? Divide its leaves into the millions of atoms you suppose, and there is no longer flower or scent to be found. Unite them, and they reassume the character of both. Or, if you will be still more refined, may not consciousness be thought like a quality, or a figure? dissolve it into its component parts, you know not what it is; compound the parts, its character is recognised. For example, let us take the *roundness* of the marble ball that decorates that pillar. Crush it to pieces, no part of it is round; yet put together, it constitutes that shape. The roundness you see can only be one roundness, yet it may be divisible *ad infinitum*."

"This was, before you, the argument of a very learned, but not a very clear man, Dodwell; but neither your scent nor your figure," said Evelyn, "will bear you out. For who does not see that if each of the particles of the honeysuckle had not *some* degree of sweetness individually, the flower itself could have none when the particles were united? And in the same manner, if the pieces of the ball had not some convexity, though, perhaps, imperceptible, and at best, not absolutely round, the ball itself could never have been formed. This, again, has been put in the clearest point of view, both by Locke

and the clear-minded Clarke*,—who rests upon the very simple demonstration I mentioned before, that whatever is compounded of many things, is still only those very things, change them as you will. Thus, I repeat, possible changes of figure can only end in figure; magnitude in magnitude; motion in motion; colour in colour. Emphatically he infers, that no composition can possibly produce a new power, *specifically* different."

"What is his proof?" asked Tremaine.

"Only that an effect would be produced without a cause," answered Evelyn.

"I confess," said Tremaine, "you have considered this matter more deeply than I."

"It has been my business so to do," answered Evelyn; "but if those things make you pause on the immateriality of thought, more than you expected, what will you say to the *demonstrable* proof that there *may*, nay, that there *must* be such immateriality?"

"I would catch at it eagerly," cried Tremaine.

"You believe in a God, the maker and governor of the world?" said Evelyn.

"In all sincerity of heart I do," answered Tremaine.

"If he made the world, it is to be supposed he planned it?"

"Certainly!"

"If he planned it, he must have imagined it beforehand."

"Agreed!"

"Why, then, there is *mind* without matter, unless you suppose that matter either planned or made itself."

Tremaine again faltered.

"I need not ask you," pursued Evelyn, "whether you think this awful, this wonderful Author of nature, is himself corporeal!"

"I suppose not."

"Suppose not! Do you not feel sure?"

"I think I do," said Tremaine.

* See the contest between Clarke and Dodwell; and Locke b. iv. ch. 10.

"Why, then, we have here a demonstration, or what is tantamount to it, that there is such a thing as spirit distinct from matter. Spirit all powerful, and all superior, because the very Creator and ruler of matter itself* !"

"This, perhaps, may be the truth," said Tremaine.

"It is also, then, true," continued Evelyn, "that it must think, for it plans—will, for it performs—be conscious, for it knows."

"In the Almighty, yes!" cried Tremaine.

"Yet you have never seen this great and awful Spirit," pursued Evelyn; "nor will you contend that body is necessary to him?"

"Assuredly not."

"If, then, he should clothe himself with body," said Evelyn, "or mix himself in matter, in some mysterious way, though I own it is above my comprehension....."

"What then?" asked Tremaine.

"Why, then he might subtract himself from it again, and remain the same spirit, though the matter with which he was clothed, crumbled to pieces."

"If the first supposition is possible," said Tremaine, "the other follows as a necessary consequence."

"I ask no more," observed his friend; "for you see here the demonstration that some spirit there is, and must be, distinct from matter; and the possibility depending only on the pleasure and purpose of the Almighty, it is made out that it *may* be united and disunited from matter without perishing, though the form of the matter that contained it may be destroyed."

"Yet how can such an union exist in us?" asked Tremaine.

"I know not," answered his friend "nor is it necessary for my point that I should. It is sufficient to impress, that spirit is really a subsisting thing, in other words, a distinct substance of itself, whether with or without body: which I hold to be a great and decisive

* I desire all doubters to ponder this again, again, and again.

step towards the proof that it does actually subsist in union with our body."

"The second step, or that actual union, is the most important," said Tremaine. "How are we to come at a knowledge of it?"

"By its effects: and in this consists all that we know of matter itself."

"The difference, however, is too sensibly striking," said Tremaine, "not to throw all into doubt as to one; while the other is certain and palpable to our every sense. I *see* those beautiful heavens, I hear that sweet concert of birds, I scent these luscious perfumes, but with the spiritual part of me that you talk of, I am not even in the least acquainted."

"This is Bolingbroke, with his phenomena," said Evelyn. "Surely, we are, or may be, as well acquainted with the phenomena of spirit as of matter, only that we get at the knowledge with a little more trouble; for all you thus warmly describe, are, as logicians would say, but mere modes of matter; they are simply accidents which we should be sorry to be without: but destroy them, and matter would still remain; they are, therefore, not *essential* to matter, whose substance we are not a whit the better acquainted with, because of our eyes and noses."

"What use do you make of this?" asked Tremaine.

"Why, that we may know spirit, exactly in the same way as we know matter; that is, in its modes and its accidents," said Evelyn; "for we feel that we have something within us which understands, wills, and judges: we choose and refuse, and have mental and perceptible, though invisible, reason for both. There is even a mental happiness derived from the contemplation of the fitness of things—that is, of truth—which almost equals your heavens, your birds, and your perfumes. Nay, I am a traitor to philosophy in hesitating for a moment, under the *illecebræ* of this sweet place, to prefer it, as all wise men must, to everything sensual and material. At least, I might ask with old Sherlock, 'Who ever was admired

or respected for eating and drinking well, or carrying luxury to its height?' If any one doubt, let him compare Apicius or Heliogabalus with Socrates. There is even a sort of respect about the filthy cloak of old Diogenes himself; such is the natural elevation of wisdom, or mind, above sensuality, or matter.

"But what shall we say of genius, and all those master spirits which have charmed and governed the world from its creation, and will continue to do so, spite of the defects or decay of matter—

> 'Blind Thamyris, and blind Mæonides,
> 'And Phineus and Tiresias, prophets old!'

"In short, let me but oppose Homer and Shakspeare to your man of clay, before he is warmed by his Promethean fire, and, I think, Jupiter himself might have excused the theft of the fire, not merely from its necessity, but its beautiful and dazzling effects!"

Tremaine smiled at this little burst; then gravely returning to the subject, "You have uttered things," said he, "richly worth considering, and which I promise you to consider: meantime, there is one question, which to my mind no one has ever satisfactorily answered, or scarcely even attempted to answer; I mean the co-eternity, if I may so say, of matter with spirit. It has been sensibly asked, may not matter have existed from all eternity, and only been put into the order that it at present wears by the eternal mind that informs it?"

"This is Spinozism, or little better," said Evelyn, "and you would soon fall into the full error of that Jew and his masters, that God is the soul, not the creator of the world. But when you say nobody has answered this potent question, do you not forget Locke?"

"At this moment I am not aware of his opinion," said Tremaine.

"He reasons thus on this very question," replied the Doctor. "Matter is eternal. Why? Because you cannot conceive its being made out of nothing. Why are you not yourself eternal? Because you know *when* you began to be. But the matter whereof you are made

began not then to be, or it would not be eternal. To be sure, the particles of which you are composed might have begun to be put together within a given time; but these particles are not *you*—they make not that *thinking, conscious* being you are. When then did that thinking being begin to be? If never, you have been thinking from all eternity; which is absurd enough. If it began, it is not eternal, but has been created, and created out of nothing; for we have demonstrated that it is not matter—which, for the moment, we allow you to say has been eternal. But if God can create a thinking substance, which is the nobler substance, out of nothing, *à fortiori*, he can create matter. Your only reason, therefore, for doubting—namely, that you cannot conceive matter being created out of nothing—fails you*."

The Doctor stopped, and Tremaine allowed he had spoken from an oracle. "There is, however, one other objection," continued he, "which I wish you most seriously to ponder, and, if possible, to refute. It is that founded upon our knowledge of the brain. Unfortunately, anatomists are too often free-thinkers."

"A great mistake," observed Evelyn; "and Galen, you know, owed his conversion to God to the mere contemplation of a skeleton, which, by accident, he met with. But go on."

"Whatever the soul, mind, or thought," continued Tremaine, "the brain is evidently the seat of it. All sensation, all perception, centre there; it is to the brain that every thing is in the first place communicated; and in the brain we feel and know that we judge of the communication. In short, we do not think with our hands or feet."

"Agreed!" cried Evelyn.

"Moreover, it is in proportion to the size, perhaps to the fineness of our brains," pursued Tremaine, "that we are wise and refined."

"But not good, kind, pious, or gentle," observed Evelyn.

* See Locke, book iv. chap. 10, sec. 18.

"That the shape and size of the brain," said Tremaine, "in short, that the attributes of matter, influence the properties of the soul, and the nature of thought, is enough for me to feel assured that they must themselves be material. Where the brain is hurt, the understanding is gone, though life remains: and even your favourite being and ally, *consciousness*, may be annihilated, by the destruction of a portion, a very small portion indeed of human matter. Are Epicurus and Lucretius then, indeed, such fools in supposing that the soul is material? and how is this reconcilable with your argument from consciousness—which I own much impressed me?"

"The difficulty," observed Evelyn, "is not new, and has been completely refuted by a knowledge of that very anatomy which you avouch in your support."

"I shall be not less pleased than surprised," exclaimed Tremaine, "if this can be made out."

"Why thus," answered Evelyn. "The consciousness I spoke of, I rely on, you know, as an integral, identical, and ever-during being. Its indivisibility, and therefore indiscerptibility, is, in fact, the only real and unequivocal proof that I am the same being now that I was forty years ago. All about me has changed; my flesh, my blood, and for aught I know my very bones may have so passed off in the wear and tear of my material nature, in the course of all its wonderful processes, perpetually and without intermission at work, in sleep as well as waking, that I know not the part of me that is actually the same as when I came into the world. Our hair, teeth, and nails, we obviously *see* changing; nay, our very skin. Nature seems ever indefatigably employed in the business of subtraction, by perspiration and the various secretions, and of addition, by food. The changes are, indeed, so gradual as not to be perceptible; but they are not the less changes: so that we are like a ship, built perhaps in the last century, and still thought the same as was originally launched, yet so often repaired, that not a nail, rope, or piece of timber of the original, remains.

"Well then—amidst all this transmutation, is the brain alone to escape? and if it do not, what becomes of

that consciousness, which yet is supposed to be identified with it? If that too has been divided, thrust into other places, lost and renewed with new atoms, how is it, I say, that I know myself to be the same thinking conscious being now that I was forty years ago? My flesh and blood, nails, teeth, hair, and skin are, I know, *not* the same; my mind is. There is but one consequence for your supposition, if just; namely, that the brain is the identical self-same brain it always was."

"And may it not be so?" asked Tremaine.

"So far from it," replied Evelyn, "that of all the changes the body undergoes, the brain is proved to experience the most frequent, and the greatest; so much so, that the animal spirits which belong to it, and in which reside the very quintessence of that fine subtle matter, the *flos Bacchi* of your Lucretius (in short, the soul you have supposed), are said by some to flow periodically through this brain, and return to the heart, and the brain itself is to be also *dissolved*."

"I confess to you," allowed Tremaine, "this is very important."

"It is to me decisive," said Evelyn; "for what, let me ask, becomes of memory, as well as consciousness? Memory! that storehouse in which all our foregone knowledge is laid up for use, as it may be required, in endless variety, and boundless amplitude? The argument of the materialists upon memory itself I own I never could comprehend. Nor has the question ever been answered, or scarcely attempted to be answered, 'Where our ideas are deposited when actually not present to us?' We are told, in the brain. But in what cells? How is there room (it has justly been asked) for all that a man of learning or wisdom, or a mere old man that has seen the world, knows, forgets, and recovers? Behold the volumes of science, history, arts, law, inventions! All are used, laid aside, and used again, by the same man, as occasion may require. Some ideas may have slept for half a century, yet come out again, fresh and green as when first conceived. We are told that association awakens them. But where did they sleep? Is this lightly to be got over

by a gratuitous supposition, neither proved nor proveable, that it is the result of some mechanism of the brain, which nobody even pretends to understand, much less explain? I ask if this palpable, tangible, natural, and everlasting difficulty, is to be answered by the mere gratuitous supposition of what is not even an hypothesis (supported, or attempted to be supported), that there is an asserted occult quality in the brain; in the same manner as, in the days of darkness, before the dawning of science, a thousand other occult qualities formerly supplied reasons for all phenomena that could not be explained?"

Tremaine was a little overpowered, and not the less so when Evelyn asked him pointedly, whether, and how, he ever knew memory accounted for on mechanical principles? whether he could account for it himself?

He owned he could not, but supposed it a property of the brain, because it resided there.

"Well then," replied Evelyn, "taking the thing for granted, at least for a moment, I ask you how the ideas of fifty years' standing, which have been supposed all that time in this storehouse of the brain, can have remained in undisturbed preservation, when it has been asserted that the storehouse itself has been in perpetual agitation, and even knocked down and built up again."

Tremaine again allowed the immense importance of the argument, and a long pause ensued.

At length, breaking silence, as if struck with a new, or a suddenly recollected topic, he observed with seriousness—

"There is, after all, to me, a fatal objection to all this excellent reasoning (excellent, I allow, whether it convince or not), which I should be really glad if you could clear up. But I own I never knew any one who could do so."

"Name it," said Evelyn.

"All the learning, thought, and reflection, and the genius too, which have been used upon this occasion, seem after all wildly wasted."

"As how?"

"Why, in proving the indiscerptibility, and therefore immortality of the soul of man, you prove (for the whole argument applies) that the soul of the lowest animal, a brute, or an insect, is equally immortal. The principle, though not in the same degree, applies alike to the most disgusting and hateful vermin, as to the noblest animals; to the lice and bugs that were the plagues of Pharaoh, equally as to the sagacious elephant, or the faithful dog."

"Your objection," returned Evelyn, "is not either novel, or without its difficulty. Nay, I will own to you, I have been formerly staggered with it."

"And how did you get over it?" asked Tremaine.

"You mean the argument to be what the logicians call *ex absurdo*," observed Evelyn.

"I state it as such."

"Yet is the absurdity made out?"

"I think it is; for it would be difficult to make me believe that the crawling worm, the loathsome toad, or the fly that springs from the dunghill, was made to live again. If therefore it is not positively an argument *ex absurdo*, which possibly it may not strictly be, it certainly comes under the description of that sort of argument, which, by proving too much, proves nothing."

"We, at least, know nothing about the matter," answered Evelyn; "and when that is so, I never will suffer anything (whatever appearances may be) to interfere with what I think I do know. What know we of the ends of our own creation?"

"Nothing," said Tremaine, with a sigh.

"That does not prevent there being an end," continued Evelyn, "it only makes our situation the more awful; but it cannot invalidate the supposition that there is such an end, because it is possible there may be also an end in the creation of things to *us* so worthless. The most you can make of it is, that the creation of a toad is beyond our comprehension: is that of a man, then, within it?"

"But its immortality?" pursued Tremaine.

"I have said, that it will, at least, not *disprove* ours;

we have therefore no right to demand an account of it; I mean as a stipulation, as it were, for our belief concerning ourselves."

"Do you really then believe, that that gnat, which is settling upon you, is to live again?"

"I submit to my ignorance," answered the Doctor: "I am myself in many respects worse than a gnat, which is, it should seem, incapable of sin."

"Your inference?"

"That its being mortal or immortal would not prevent my immortality."

"But *can* it on your principles be mortal, or rather *must* it not be immortal?"

"I know not the nature of an insect's mind, if mind it can be called," answered Evelyn.

"Well, then, of the most reasoning of brutes, the elephant; or the most friendly, the dog?"

"We know not even their minds in sufficient accuracy. But though I should agree with you, that the arguments we have discussed applied equally to them as to us, I see not the absurdity, I mean logical, gross, and *clearly proved* absurdity, in the supposition of their immortality, that should make us doubt the argument for our own. Even if you will have it that they must be immortal (which I confess does not trouble me) there is nothing to prevent the exertion of that will and power which can (but which *alone* can) overcome the consequences of all I have been endeavouring to prove."

"Nay! this is absolute paradox," said Tremaine.

"My meaning is," replied Evelyn, "that if the immortality of brutes were *inconsistent* (which at least it is not) with the immortality of man, God's will might annihilate them, though the constitution and fabric of what souls they have, might, if left to themselves, imply that they would be immortal."

Tremaine was without reply, except to express his wonder, if this were so, that so much design and contrivance should be thrown away.

"Better leave it," said Evelyn, "for be assured it is beyond us. All I mean to contend for is, that your

objection is not founded upon what you first imagined, an inconsistency, and consequently an absurdity; and the argument *ex absurdo*, and even the objection drawn from proving too much, must therefore be given up."

Tremaine confessed that this was not so unfair as at first it appeared, and that upon reflection, it might probably relieve his difficulty.

Evelyn went on: "You, who are a Cartesian" (looking at the picture of the French philosopher),—

"Not so," interrupted Tremaine. "You know I have said I have abandoned what little bias I had towards him."

"One of his greatest errors, however, would have helped you much in this affair."

"You mean his doctrine that brutes are without souls, or reason, or even sensation, and therefore cannot enter into the account."

"I do," said Evelyn; "and to be fair, ought we not also to add, that he has exceedingly well made out all we have been discussing, concerning the immateriality of reason and thought?"

"He very much supports you as far as regards men," said Tremaine, "but this very error, so gross, regarding brutes, proves to me the strength of the difficulty I have mentioned, and hence his very absurd paradox as to them."

"No doubt," replied Evelyn; "and hence the sneering Bayle, in one of his most adroit sneers, observes that it is a pity Des Cartes should be refuted as to the souls of brutes, as his system is one of the best supports of the doctrine of immateriality as to the soul of man. But we want no such support. I say we know nothing with precision enough, concerning the reasoning faculty of brutes, to let it at all enter into the argument concerning our own. But even if we did, a difficulty at best collateral and obscure cannot possibly invalidate a proof that is direct and clear."

Tremaine allowed that he was very much satisfied.

"Now then, if you please," pursued Evelyn, "I will go back to my ship. I have, however, little more to do

with her, since all this digression has been merely to defend my illustration against your assertion, that you had *seen* the supposed victims annihilated. You allow that, if you saw them carried off alive, the curiosity would be insatiable, and the feeling fearful?"

"I do," said Tremaine.

"Only suppose, then, the next point in the gradation —lower, indeed, but very little lower, in the scale of fearfulness; suppose these victims regularly disappeared, without any one knowing whether dead or alive, and that none of them ever were heard of again."

"It would shock every heart not absolutely hardened!" cried Tremaine.

"Why then, as I contend," pursued Evelyn, "my illustration is apposite. It at least does not appear that the living, or rather the thinking, the conscious power within us—in other words, the soul—is extinguished by the death of the body. Its powers, however, disappear, never to come back—never to be heard of again; and all our thoughts, all our anxieties, amounting sometimes to agony, as our turn for going approaches, are directed towards that country to which our supposed victims have been carried, and from which none have ever returned."

"The result?"

"The result is, that no man in his senses can, or ought to be indifferent at death. Take away those who are hardened in vice, or who have lost their reason by pain and misfortune—and no man is. Although, therefore, no one has ever been able to describe, perhaps even to imagine, the sort of country to which the ship I have supposed is bound, and where she deposits her victims, still the effect upon the conduct, or rather the expectations that may influence our conduct, cannot be a light one."

"Here I quite go along with you," said Tremaine.

"The great Master of nature does so too," continued Evelyn, "when he makes fear for the future stop the hand that is meditating self-murder.

> "Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all,
> And thus the native hue of resolution
> Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

"You build then much upon conscience," observed Tremaine, "in your philosophy?"

"Say rather my religion," remarked Evelyn, "I certainly do."

"Shall I tell you my own very unsatisfactory notions of conscience?" asked Tremaine.

"By all means," answered his friend. "I suppose you do not question either her existence or her power."

"Not her existence, but her power much; and worst of all, I own I particularly question how the sharpest stings can be made to conduce to the proofs of a future state. For suppose it were actually proved there was no such state: might not conscience be equally made use of by the Author of nature, as a mean, in the same manner as instinct or reason, for the better government of our lives while they last?"

"There is something in the remark," replied Evelyn, "but you will allow not much, if you pursue the subject. The frogs, you know, were at first frightened at King Log, whom Jupiter sent to govern them."

"How does this apply?" asked Tremaine.

"Finish the fable," answered the Doctor, "by which you will see that, though he made a great splashing at first when he was thrown among them, finding he was utterly without power to hurt them, they presently leaped upon his back, and laughed at him. But though we all know how conscience may be quieted, in the various struggles of the world, it breaks out even to the end of life; and hence I found my remark upon it, for in this it is different from the frogs. As nature never acts in vain, I would ask to what possible end can it conduce, to be pricked by this monitor on our death-beds, if all is to end there? Who that ever calculated at all upon his past life, and summed up the account between his deeds and his conscience, would even take this trouble in the last moment when it could not possibly avail—when a sponge was, in fact, at hand to rub out the whole score? And how many would actually feel thus indifferent,

> "But that the dread of something *after* death,
> Puzzles the will!"

"I own, my dear friend," said Tremaine, "you have much enlightened me—much won me over to my own wishes on the subject; yet how account for those instances of what is called dying hard, which many malefactors have exhibited after the worst spent lives, if conscience is anything towards the proof of a future state?"

"I should be glad to have the fact ascertained," said Evelyn. "It is, however, too certain there are some instances of it. But so there are of the most horrid acts of depravity against nature—of the most outrageous blasphemies and rebellion. Their causes are egregious, besotted selfishness, madness, despair! But neither can we say this is the ordinary, real course of nature, nor does their existence, as lamentable exceptions, disprove the reasoning, or the rule."

"I confess you have greatly satisfied me," said Tremaine.

Evelyn grasped his hand, and, with affectionate kindness, said, "And trust I shall still farther. The point, then, that we have hitherto reached, is simply this—that if there were nothing more than such periodical visits and periodical disappearances as I have supposed, common sense would force us to look anxiously at the event, and not suppose the matter was to end there; and whoever pretended to laugh at this anxiety, and be careless as to what was to come, we should look upon him as either a fool, or a madman at best."

"I allow this," said Tremaine.

"In this state of things, then," pursued Evelyn, "suppose a tradition or traditions had existed for a series of years, from the oldest times known, in the country where this awful visitation prevailed, one of which traditions recounted why the visitation was first ordained; that the ship came from the dominions of a mighty Prince, to whose personal government the nation in question had been originally subject, and who still continued so far to govern them, that he sent out this ship to call every man to his account; that he had frequently sent messengers among them for this purpose, warning them of their state; and that, on one occasion, he had sent a Prince of

his own family, to acquaint them with the nature of the country to which they were bound, and to impress upon them that immediately on their arrival they should be most strictly examined, and punished or rewarded according to their deserts."

"I see what you would infer," cried Tremaine.

"It is plain," said Evelyn; "and I ask, in the first place, whether, with the known fact of the ship constantly before us, such traditions would be unreasonable?"

"They would be as reasonable as I can suppose any tradition to be," answered Tremaine.

"That is a considerable admission," continued Evelyn.

"Not much," interrupted Tremaine, "for I look upon all tradition as so unsatisfactory, so little precise, and so impossible to be proved, that I build just nothing upon it."

"Yet tradition is sometimes very accurately delivered down to us, and even consecrated by festivals and solemn ceremony," said Evelyn.

"Here, again, I am unfortunate," observed Tremaine; "I ask for truth, and I am sent to ceremony. What can be derived from so fleeting, so foolish, so capricious a thing?"

"More than you seem to be aware of," answered Evelyn. "For, not to lose time in general reasoning, let me ask you, in our own country, when you see the bonfires and the hanging in effigy on the fifth of November....."

"Surely," cried Tremaine, almost impatiently, "you will not gravely argue this! Who does not see that it is the interest or amusement of a parcel of idle boys that keeps it alive, and but for this, no man would hear of it?"

"You forget," said Evelyn, "that the State itself has sanctioned the day, as one of thenksgiving, and to be kept holy. But even if it were not so, how was it that these idle boys could get such a thing first tolerated, and then encouraged? Will not your candour allow, and your knowledge of history prove to you, that the mere celebration of this rough ceremony indicates the general outline of the plot it pretends to commemorate?"

"Perhaps it does," said Tremaine.

"In like manner, no Jew, however unprejudiced, but believed, and had reason to believe, from the regular and reverential celebration of the passover, that there had been bondage in Egypt, and deliverance from it, by a passage of the Red Sea."

"Deliverance, if you will," cried Tremaine; "but not by miracle."

"That is not now the question; the point only is as to the probability of some foundation for the tradition recorded in the ceremony. Again, therefore, I ask, whether, in the case supposed, when we have a perpetual historical tradition, supported by ceremonies, and sealed with blood, that a person has been among us who said he came from that country, where he had seen all those victims who had been so regularly carried off, and seen them regularly brought to trial, and punished or rewarded, according to their merits—whether, I say, we could deem such a tradition to be either very incredible, or even very irrational."

"You have, I own," observed Tremaine, after a very long pause, and three or four turns in the gallery by himself, "stated these topics of my former meditations, in a clearer and more pointed manner than I ever before knew them: and yet, if I were not afraid of offending you, I have seen them all so pierced with ridicule, that I own even all your learning and ingenuity, your elaborate demonstrations, and your appositeness of illustration, are ill able to stand it."

"The best and most holy things," said Evelyn, gravely, "may be made the butt for ridicule to shoot at. Whether they repel, or are hurt by the dart, is a different question; and you must give me leave to doubt the last."

"You will allow," returned Tremaine, "that ridicule is what has been called the test of truth."

"I allow no such thing," replied Evelyn, with great seriousness, "even if we could, with any precision, understand what ridicule is. For the most part I may think that what is *called* the ridicule of sacred things,

can only derive its force from the profligacy of those whom it enlists in its support. I believe you have a respect for Clarendon," added Evelyn.

"A great and sincere one," answered Tremaine.

"Tell me, then, do you think that if that profligate and wicked Duke of Buckingham himself, (who turned out afterwards beneath contempt, under the sword of the illustrious Ossory, like Thersites under Ulysses,) do you think that if he had attempted to sink Clarendon in your esteem, by such silly stuff as imposed upon the King, he would have succeeded?"

"I do not immediately recollect the story," said Tremaine.

"You remember the tongs and the bellows borne before him for mace and purse," rejoined Evelyn, "which was said to have gone farther than anything else, in first raising a laugh against this excellent person, and then, by sinking him in respect, paving the way to his ruin."

Tremaine owned it was surprising the King could have been so weak.

"Say rather, so rascally," replied Evelyn. "But at least, then, with you, the scoundrel Duke, with the strumpet his accomplice*, would not have succeeded."

"Certainly not," cried Tremaine.

"And yet here was ridicule, and successful too," said Evelyn; "but whether the success was owing to the wit, or the base rascality of those on whom it operated, is perhaps a question which King Charles, if he were alive, would not like to be asked. Tell me," continued Evelyn, "if any one were to attempt to ridicule your father,—who was lame, and what is called old-fashioned, but whom, I believe, you venerate for his worth and innocent life,—by imitating his lameness, his dress, or manner, or even any little foible he might have; let the imitator do it ever so well, do you think it would break in upon your respect for the person imitated?"

"You cannot be serious in asking," said Tremaine.

"And yet," pursued Evelyn, "as far as imitation went,

* Duchess of Cleveland.

it might be thought ridiculous, and your father might be said to be turned into ridicule."

Tremaine assented.

"You see then," added Evelyn, "that merely to call names, or to take liberties, or perhaps (for I shrewdly suspect whom you allude to in what you have said) to tell lies, is at least not wit: but, whatever it be, as it is in every body's power, there is little difficulty, and consequently little merit in it."

Tremaine desired him to explain his meaning farther.

"What I mean is, that even for wit to succeed in bringing virtue or wisdom, much more religion, into contempt, there must be great aptitude to the contrary qualities in those who are to judge; but if, in the things supposed, there is no truth for the ridicule to hang on, the wit itself is rather equivocal."

"All that is very clear," said Tremaine.

"Now, then, if you please, for the ridicule which you say has so shaken you upon our late awful subject."

"I alluded to Voltaire," answered Tremaine.

"I thought as much," observed Evelyn; "and I very much fear you mean in the trash of the *Dictionnaire Philosophique*."

"It is true," said Tremaine.

"This, in a man of your class and character of mind, is not what I expected!" exclaimed Evelyn. "But will you point out the instances of this attempt at wit? for of wit itself, on these subjects, I have no hesitation to say he had none."

"Voltaire no wit!" exclaimed Tremaine.

"That I did not say," replied Evelyn; "on the contrary, "I have willingly laughed with him, in his *Contes*, as well as wept with him in his *Tragédies;* his ease and elegance, on almost whatever subject he handles, delight me; but I am equally moved, not merely with detestation at his impiety, but with wonder at the empty impudence with which he attempts to support it. Hume had some learning; Bolingbroke at least borrowed some; Epicurus made a great sect; and Cicero everywhere keeps the mind on the stretch: but for this wit of yours,

if he had written nothing else, I should have thought him only a fool."

"Can you blame me, however," said Tremaine, "you, who own his wit, for paying tribute to it when I find it?"

"By no means," answered Evelyn: "but I deny the wit which presumes to prepare us for laughing, by imposing upon us what we know to be false; and I am at a loss to understand how a man of judgment can be dazzled by sophisms so glaring, and, therefore, so contemptible, that I know not which to wonder at most, their idiotism, or their impudence."

"To what do you particularly apply this severity?" asked Tremaine.

"Possibly to what you may have thought most witty," replied Evelyn. "Take, for example, his illustration of the soul, by the clapper of a bellows, the body being, as he says, the bellows itself. 'There is a clapper to it,' he says, 'which gives it motion and use, and which I have made for it,' he adds, 'under the name of soul. Yet the bellows can be pulled to pieces, and the poor soul goes with it.' What child does not see that the bellows and the clapper are all one machine; that, indeed, the machine cannot be a bellows, but a mere piece of wood, without the clapper: and if he must have a comparison for the soul, it can only be the hand that uses it, and sets it in motion. This is wholly distinct, you see, from its body, and so far is for us; yet you, perhaps, have formerly laughed at this, Mr. Tremaine!"

"Formerly, I confess I have: certainly, not of late."

"And why not?"

"Not because what you say ought not to have been obvious before," replied Tremaine; "but because, from my humour at the time, some mist must have been before my eyes, which is now much removed."

"You rejoice me," said Evelyn, "and I will not, therefore, go on; otherwise I would wish you to consider the truth and fairness with which he asks if the Creator would condescend (alluding to the Jews) to be the King of usurers and old-clothesmen? The wit, you see, is in calling the subjects of the Almighty by these disgusting

names. Yet the wit is a lie; for he has wilfully confounded the modern with the ancient Jews. Again, he is witty, to be sure, in asking what is meant by going *up* to heaven, when in the planetary system there is neither upwards nor downwards; and is most especially facetious when he says this heaven of ours is nothing more than a parcel of clouds and vapours. Who does not see (I am sure the merest child will) that he here wilfully confounds the atmosphere which surrounds the earth, and which we call heaven in physics, with the happy place, whatever it is, which we designate by that name in religion?"

"This is true," said Tremaine.

"Of a piece with this," pursued Evelyn, "are his sneers at the sacred story, where labouring through falsehoods of his own invention, he tells you that the Patriarch Abraham found it convenient to pass off a beautiful wife for a sister, in order that he might make money of her, by disposing of her beauty to the King of Egpyt. The whole wit is here lost, because the statement is a lie. Were I to go into all the blasphemies of the *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, and examine their witty dress, which seems so to have dazzled your imagination———"

"My dear friend," interrupted Tremaine, "I will spare you the trouble; I have long given up, upon these subjects, even the wit of Voltaire."

The Doctor again grasped his hand, and commending his candour, asked if he had been able to satisfy him on their awful subject?

"In many things," answered his friend, "you have entirely: in many, you have opened a new mode of viewing them, which I will not fail to pursue; and if not in all convincing, you have at least pointed out the road to conviction."

Evelyn embraced him affectionately, and could not help asserting, that if this were so, it would be the happiest day of his life.

"You are the truest of friends," said Tremaine, "and I own myself much relieved on many most important points. Still there are others on which you must have my

whole confession. I would not conceal a difficulty from you, even to gain what you know is my highest object on this side the Heaven you teach me to believe in."

Evelyn was moved even to tears, and asked him to propound the whole extent of his difficulty at once.

"I will, readily," answered Tremaine: "but perhaps another time were best, for the day advances. Meanwhile, I need not say, that thus far we have only meddled with metaphysical difficulties, on the nature of matter and spirit. We have not even touched upon the moral arguments which, to me are, I own, the most confounding of the two. As a sort of notice, therefore, shall I confess my scepticism, or, what it more truly is, my embarrassment, as to a particular Providence; the care which God may think it worth while to take of us, farther than by the general laws of nature he has imposed upon us; the compatibility of our free-will with foreknowledge; the necessity, much more the uncertainty of future retribution; and the existence of evil, both moral and physical, to such an extent of horror, as would lead us sometimes to lie down and despair. Religion must, indeed, be all she is represented by her votaries, if she can reconcile all these conflicting, these agonising difficulties; for such they are to every mind not absolutely hardened into indifference by selfishness, drunk with prosperity, or maddened by crime."

"A man who can so express himself," said Evelyn, kindly, "must really be unfortunate if he miss the truth he seeks. I do not disguise the thousand hard things that surround these awful questions. Yet, I trust, I shall be enabled to lead you through the rocks and shelves without shipwreck."

"Willingly shall I follow your compass," said Tremaine: "and from the fruit of to-day, I will hope the best."

It was then settled that they should meet again the next day at the same hour and place; and meantime, the Doctor said he would proceed on foot through a long line of vineyards, to Orleans, in search of Georgina's boat. He would have asked Tremaine to accompany

him, as he had done the day before, but perceiving him inclined to be silent, he forebore ; and, at last, left him lost in a deep reverie, from which, hoping it might lead to good, he had no inclination to rouse him.

CHAPTER XXXI.

PROVIDENCE.

> Think that the clearest Gods, who make them honours
> Of men's impossibilities, have preserv'd thee.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

GEORGINA'S boat was the prettiest in the world. At least, the boat-letter said it was the prettiest that ever came out of the hands of Monsieur Perrault ;—which was the same thing. In truth, it was a very pretty barge, and swam, as the boat-letter said, like a cork ; nay, he was not sure, if you loaded it ever so much, or even bored a hole in the bottom, that it would sink. "*D'ailleurs*, it was painted as if for a queen ; it was green where it ought to be green, and white where it ought to be white : had an awning of green taffeta, with fringe and tassels of pale pink,—not absolutely pink indeed, but rather *soupçon d'œillet ;* then, again, the blades of the oars were all covered with gilt dolphins, which would so glitter in the sun. In short, it was a barge for Cleopatra *ellemême*, and Ma'amselle would be so at her ease ! The price a poor louis *par jour*—cheap for the boat merely, let alone two skilful rowers—c'étoit absolument un rien, outre ....."

"Enough, enough !" cried Evelyn, who at first was disposed to admire the boat-builder's eloquence, but got tired of it before it was near a conclusion ; which, indeed, it was not, when he thus broke in upon it, and spoiled the tirade.

The object, however, of Monsieur Perrault's agent was gained, for the bargain was struck, and Evelyn was to be put in possession of this barge of Cleopatra, for a louis *par jour*, as long as he chose to keep it; and this, the boat-letter most kindly, and only for the sake of Ma'amselle's health and pleasure, wished might be a very long while.

To handsel it, behold the good Doctor embarked with his two rowers, and steering, if I must not rather say, blundering back again to the fishing-house. It was, indeed, an attempt *manqué;* for the truth is, what with the wandering of his eye over both banks of the river, and his recollections of his recent conference with his friend (to say nothing of that which was to come), he plunged the two watermen, neither of whom was a landscape painter or metaphysician, not, indeed, into the water, but into all sorts of difficulties, and twice ran them aground, into a soft bed of mud, which sadly deteriorated the splendour of Cleopatra's barge.

Georgina was, however, delighted with her father's success for her; and, though she thought a whole day rather long to be employed on this little cockle-shell, yet she owned the bauble was a very pretty bauble, and Evelyn a very kind papa, to throw away so much time upon her pleasures.

Ah! had she but known on what he had really been employed for her, the greatest part of the day!

Be that as it might, as the soft air of that charming climate really agreed with her, and she felt recruited in strength, as well as soothed in spirit, by all she felt and saw, it was determined to pass an hour that very evening upon the beautiful Loire.

Glad to escape farther questioning upon the employment of the morning, her father gave into this with pleasure. Lisette was ordered into attendance, to her very great joy—begging only deux minutes, which she took care to make ten, pour faire sa petite toilette; and, taking a stool at Georgina's feet, was not sorry to display her dark eyes, and white teeth, and her *guirlande* of roses, fresh pulled for the occasion, not merely to the

obvious admiration of her own boatmen, but to the passengers in the numerous little floats which they passed or met, going or returning, on this soft-gliding river.

Georgina was almost amused at her *coquetterie*, and Evelyn, glad she could be amused with anything, strove to drive away his own pensiveness; till, after a pleasing excursion, she returned, and retired early for the night.

It was during that night, that this excellent man revolved in seriousness their changed, but still uncertain situation with Tremaine. That he was evidently a different being on many radical points, and bade fair to approach what was so much wished in all, gave the truest satisfaction, even to scruples as strong as Evelyn's. Tremaine had opened, however, a fearful prospect for the next day, which filled his friend with uneasiness. "But I will trust to what has already been effected," said Evelyn to himself. "The bias of his mind is changed; his prejudices, if not subsided, are no longer stubborn; the rubbish that overlaid his candour is at least cleared away."

With this reflection, and commending himself and his daughter to Heaven, whose instrument he still hoped to be, he sank into a sweet rest.

The next morning he found Georgina pleased enough with her water excursion to be thinking of another. But as the sun was too powerful, she willingly put it off till the evening; and being well provided with books, she the more readily allowed her father to proceed again without her to Orleans, to present, as he said (and what was, in truth, no fiction), a letter of credit to the banker, and another of introduction to the bishop of the place.

It may be supposed to what place he first went, and he was glad to find Tremaine on the alert, and full of genuine satisfaction at their last conference.

"There is not a point that we touched," said he, "on which I feel that I can any longer disagree with you."

But, on entering the house, and particularly the gallery, they found that it was no longer a haunt for retired philosophy. More and more furniture had gradually accumulated, and the *menuisier's* people from Orleans were

in full possession. It was only, however, changing the gallery for the yew-tree walk, which overhung the river in a charming terrace, and they were as much to themselves as if in the portico at Athens, or the garden of Academus itself.

But their retirement was strangely invaded, almost as soon as they reached it. A shot from below sounding like a bullet, struck the very hat of Tremaine; and cries of "*garde! garde!*" vociferated loudly on the other side of the terrace, showed that other danger was near. Both friends ran to a little gate, three or four paces from them, which was then wide open to the road, and ere they had closed it a single moment, they were appalled by the sight of a dog, apparently in all the horror of madness, running headlong in the path that led straight through the gate into the terrace where the friends were. Evelyn had barely a moment to close it; but closed as it was the dog attempted to leap it; his foaming jaws were within a few inches of Evelyn's hand, while it was securing the fastening; and the danger of his succeeding in a repeated leap was so great, that both friends, afraid to face him, and still more to quit the gate, stood still, quite powerless to advance or retreat. At length, the poor animal, which had run miles, and was quite exhausted, lay down in piteous moaning, and seemed to be panting out its last breath, when the *garde-de-chasse*, who had fired at it before, came within shot again, and, by a more successful aim, released it from its misery.

Both Evelyn and Tremaine, though they had recovered their presence of mind, looked at each other with mingled fear and horror. This soon gave way, perhaps in both, to another sentiment. Evelyn's heart was certainly full, and he longed to pour it out to that Providence, which, he believed, had so palpably preserved him.

"And you too, my friend," cried he, "have reason, in your heart, at least, to fall down and worship the hand that has protected us both."

Tremaine was certainly much affected; and perceiving that he should relieve his friend (perhaps himself), by quitting him for a few minutes, hastened into another

walk of the garden—observing, that he would soon return.

It was a real relief; for, of all things, Evelyn hated exhibitions, and he retreated into an alcove to be alone —if such any one can be said to be, whose full heart bursts forth in thanksgiving to a Being, from whom it supposes it had just received the most signal instance of favour and protection.

When Tremaine was alone, it was in vain that for some minutes the calculating philosophy, which, had he not been a party concerned, would have led him into a cold discussion about chance and accident, called by enthusiasts, as he said, by the name of Providence—it was in vain that this assailed him. His feeling, that he had been manifestly delivered from horrors, too great to be thought of without agony, got full possession, for a time, of his mind. He felt also for his friend. The raging, miserable animal's look and howl were long in his ears and before his eyes, and a full tide of nature approximated his feelings for awhile to those which his friend would have most wished. It has been well said by Young—

A fever argues better than a Clarke ;

and so here, the horrors of hydrophobia made him, for a moment at least, a divine, almost equal to Evelyn himself. But, as the terror went off, and the spirit recovered, all this weakened; and though he was by no means still unimbued with a sentiment of awe, and gratitude too, (supposing himself to have been specially preserved), yet that there was anything really special in it, anything more than a very favourable chance, after having been very near to the most horrid of all catastrophes, came at last to be as questionable as if it had happened to another party.

When he returned to Evelyn, he found him in conversation with the *garde-de-chasse,* who related that the dog had passed by his cottage, about a quarter of a mile off; that he had immediately loaded his double-barrelled gun with slugs, and pursued him through the wood; that not thinking of any body on the terrace, when he first

got within shot, he had fired, and would have certainly killed him and Tremaine too, for he was in the direct line of his aim, had not, at the very moment he pulled the trigger, an unaccountable tremor, or *saisissement*, as he called it, come over, and unnerved him. He traced it, he said, to the sudden sight of a small snake, which, at the time, was crossing the path.

"Cela fut heureux pour Monsieur;" added the *garde-de-chasse;* "car, il y a dix ans que je n'ai manqué."

"This was an awful crisis," cried Evelyn, as soon as the gamekeeper was gone, "and excites a thousand emotions."

"We have certainly had a most narrow escape, and have the highest reason to rejoice in our good fortune," replied Tremaine. "I might, probably, have been shot through the head, or both of us possibly the victims of the most horrible of all evils, but for . . . . . ."

"What?" asked Evelyn, observing that he paused; but Tremaine did not finish the sentence.

"If it were not for the sad doubts of Providence you have expressed," continued Evelyn, "I should hope you had been going to acknowledge its finger in this fearful event. For my own part, I am scarcely recovered from the tumult of awe, gratitude, and anxiety, with which it has filled me."

"Could I suppose," rejoined Tremaine, "that Providence was busied about so humble a creature as myself, I should have the happiness of feeling as you do. But, alas! the millions of such accidents, and such escapes! What is there in them, but that fortune, that chance, if I may so say, that pervades the whole constitution of things, and deals out safety to-day, and death to-morrow, without any providing power being necessary, farther than the original laws which govern our actions. But I repeat to you, I would give the world to think as you do."

"Tell me, my friend," said Evelyn, "was that your opinion when this horror was fresh upon your senses; I mean half an hour ago?"

"Perhaps not, exactly," answered Tremaine. "When

we are on the brink of destruction, and see no human chance of deliverance, yet are delivered, we not unnaturally think the aid comes from an unseen power. Nevertheless, the impression is merely mechanical and momentary ; it cannot stand the probe of reason.

" You are no doubt, then," returned Evelyn, " prepared to tell me, why it should be thus mechanical, when so absolutely false in its tendency ; that is, why the machine, as you call it, should be endowed with so very strong, and yet so very *useless* a feeling ? Machines that are the work of merely *human* hands, are not, in general, provided with expensive and elaborate contrivances, that lead absolutely to nothing. Why, then, should it be so with machines beyond all human power to imitate, and made by an Artist who never acts in vain ? "

" I perceive we are embarked in our subject," said Tremaine. " As to your question, I imagine it is not true that we are so endowed with this feeling, as you seem to think, but rather that it proceeds from a weakness in our nature."

" Again, I ask," returned Evelyn, " if a weakness, and of our *nature*, how came we to be endowed with it ? I repeat, *why* this weakness ?"

" I know not," said his friend ; " but it is most true, that amidst a thousand wants, and uncertainties, and unaccountable fears, both for the present and the future, nothing is so comforting as to believe we have a friend close at our side ; and, *therefore*, we believe it. Are we not all prone to believe what we wish ? do we not believe it ? and yet, are we not too often wrong ? "

" That," said Evelyn, " must depend upon the particular constitution of the party. You suppose a sanguine man ; I may suppose a melancholy one. Yours is buoyant with hope ; mine, sunk in despair. There are as many, perhaps, of the one as the other. This, therefore, does not make out your supposition, that the feeling proceeded from mere weakness. But, even though a weakness, you allow it is a natural one ? "

" I do," said Tremaine.

" Then let me ask you, if ever you knew a natural

feeling implanted in vain—any one totally useless to one's self or one's kind—in short, so useless, that human nature could go on just as well without as with it?"

Tremaine hesitated, and Evelyn proceeded:—

"Take the strong affections: for example, love, friendship, pity, gratitude, admiration at what we call great and good, the sympathies, their uneasiness, and their relief by the indulgence of benevolence, and an effort to succour, help, and comfort those who are afflicted. These, you will say, are all mechanical; but can reason say they are *false*, or that they lead to falsehood? Still less can it say, that they are useless; and if not, that they proceed from unnecessary weakness, which ought, therefore, to be conquered."

"What you have enumerated, and, probably, even this very weakness," said Tremaine, "may not be useless, and I have allowed they are not unnatural."

"Then being natural, or even, if you please, *mechanical*, there was at least a reason for their mechanism; they were not created for nothing; and we may confide in their dictates, as true dictates."

"I see your aim," said Tremaine.

"You see the truth," continued Evelyn; "for again I ask, can we acknowledge all these feelings to be for some good end, and springing from some substantive fact—a rule, as it were, belonging to our existence, (for such must all natural feelings be),—and yet state that all is weakness, blindness, uselessness, though all is nature?

"Recollect our friend Locke," continued Evelyn, "a man who certainly was not a person to *jump* to a conclusion. He tells you in terms, that though God has given us no 'innate ideas of himself, though he has stamped no original characters in our minds, wherein we may *read* his being, yet he hath not left us without witness, since we have sense, perception, and reason; and cannot want a clear proof of him *as long as we carry ourselves about with us*."

"'Tis a remarkable expression," said Tremaine.

Evelyn proceeded: "He goes on, I think, even to

state, that the proof from reason is equal to mathematical certainty; yet that the one, no more than the other, can be discovered without regular deductions from some part of our intuitive knowledge."

"The *intuitive* knowledge in religion is *the* desideratum," observed Tremaine.

"And yet, where is the difficulty in the one more than in the other? The things you so willingly take for granted in mathematics, before you even commence your Euclid, are supposed intuitive; yet they ought by no means to be without a necessity for proof in the eye of a sceptic, if he is only as sceptical in physics as he is in morals. Now all I want is, that you should allow intuition in the one, as well as in the other."

"If you mean it as to Providence, prove your intuition a little more clearly," said Tremaine.

"Why we see the whole world," continued Evelyn, "from one end to the other, through every climate, in every nation, civilised or not civilised, even though in the grossest barbarism: we see all divisions of men, all sects in religion, the followers of Moses, and Mahomet, as well as of Christ; of Baal and Odin, and Brama, of Confucius, of the Lama of Tartary, of the Vitzliputzli of the Mexicans, the adorers of Jupiter, the worshippers of Heroes;—all, all confess the Godhead, and the necessity for prayer; all join in its exercise, because all too fatally, at one period or other of their lives, feel the necessity for protection, the demand for consolation, the aspirations of hope, the dreadfulness of despair. The Consul of Rome could not fight till he had inspected the entrails of the sacrifice; nor the scourge of God among the Huns, till he had immolated a horse. It was said of Caligula, that he crept under the bed whenever it thundered. The most crafty of kings, Louis XI., could do nothing without the Virgin. The most sturdy of our Reformers, those who broke the chain of Romish superstition, were themselves devotees to even visible interposition; and the bold and impious Voltaire himself died in an agony of horror. In more familiar life, I have heard of robbers who could not advance to the pillage and even murder of

mankind, without imploring success on their enterprise, from that Deity who prohibits all wrongs. Dirk Hatteraick could not proceed on a smuggling expedition without being blessed by a gipsy. I have myself seen at a gaming-table a wretched countryman kneel down in a corner, bespeaking favour from God himself, to a particular card; and I have also witnessed the most dreadful impieties, the most shocking imprecations against Heaven, on ill success.

"Whence can all this tide of uniform feeling be, from the emperor to the peasant, from the religious zealot to the most licentious philosopher? Why does it thus always prevail, under millions of discrepancies, mutual oppositions, mutual hatred (hatred even to extermination), whether among nations or individuals? Whence can it arise, except from something so ingrafted in our hearts, so universal in our composition, that it is nature herself that cries within us, that there is an all-seeing, all-providing, as well as all-powerful God!"

"You put it strongly," said Tremaine.

"Hence, were I called upon," continued Evelyn, "to characterise man, among other definitions, I should say he was religious, that is, a worshipping animal, and, of course, confiding in the Deity he worships."

"Is the latter so clear?" asked Tremaine.

"Why, when we pray, we expect at least to be heard. It is nature, as I observe, that tells us to pray. Is nature, then, mocked by him who created her? Is it so with other animals? When a hare is hunted, or a flock of sheep exposed in the mountains, does it occur to them to address their Creater for assistance? or, if they escape danger, to thank him for supposed aid? Why, then, does man do this—man alone, who is endowed with reason? If you tell me, *he* is trained to it, I ask why he is trained to it, and not a brute? If you tell me, *on account* of that reason, you grant me the whole of what I ask.

"But you say it is mere fantasy, and therefore useless. Man, therefore, is mocked by his nature, a brute not!

"Is this, then, your philosophy? Is it consonant to any analogy you have ever discovered between man and

brute? Is it presumable from any data? Is it not contrary to all data?

"Common sense, then (the most infallible of guides), decides for us: and if so, here is Providence, almost without an argument; for the conviction of it springs from natural feeling, and remains not only *without*, but in *spite* of argument. Here then is prayer, as an immediate consequence; prayer, which distinguishes man from all his fellow-animals.

"Why, I say, should this be, if it is useless? Tell me not of superstition. I renew the question in another shape. Why is a man superstitious? For even superstition proves the belief of an interfering God. There may be ten thousand errors, but always belief, and always prayer. Why prayer, if no power? or if power, no willingness to hear? You talk of a law of nature! Prayer is that law! Not you, but fools have said it is priestcraft that has done this. Ridiculous! Could priestcraft, kingcraft, or any craft whatever, retain the whole human race in chains, from the beginning of time? Oppression, fraud, hypocrisy, have always been resisted, and, sooner or later, with success. Tyrants have been thrown down, nations emancipated, prejudices have disappeared before the daylight of science. The oracles (the perfection of priestcraft) have been extinguished: religion never. Wherever, then, there is a man, there also is worship; there, therefore, prayer; and in prayer, emphatically, the belief of Providence. Hence, as I contend, the *natural* proof of it."

"You push your point warmly, nay, even enthusiastically," said Tremaine; "but really, so vast and disputable a question cannot, I should think, be decided by an assumed intuition. Intuition, or what we call so, is liable to so many errors, so many diversities, that to me it is the least satisfactory of all proofs."

"I agree with you," replied Evelyn, "that it is liable to error, and should not be lightly assumed; and you will observe that on this great point, nothing less than the universal consent of mankind is what I have counted upon.

"Let me ask you this," continued Evelyn, perceiving Tremaine was hesitating:—"When all brute animals, according to their several species, universally pursue a particular habit or mode of existence, does it ever happen that it is not for some end of their being? and are they ever disappointed in that end? Is it for mere pastime that they do this? Do they find nothing their instinct has made them expect? Nothing to recompense their trouble? In short, is their nature mocked by all they thus uniformly do?"

"Of course not," said Tremaine.

"Then, if all mankind, let them be placed where they will, exhibit certain predilections, and follow universally one certain habit in every part of the globe, all with one certain hope and expectation, yet all invariably to be disappointed, should we not say that nature was unjust in this, and that the brutes were better off than we?"

Tremaine allowed this might be so, if the fact warranted it; "yet, after all, might not this universal consent be more owing to our nurses than to nature? They are our first and most impressive instructresses, and their lessons are at least the longest remembered. Your universal consent may therefore be merely universal education, and the expediency of such education would alone recommend it; for of its efficacious power, in keeping men under good government, no one can doubt."

"The speciousness of that argument," returned Evelyn, "will not bear the touch of experience. Others, before you, have called all these convictions the effects of mere nurses' tales; as if the tale of an old woman could enchain the reason of a well-educated man. I grant that with very weak, very ignorant, and even very wicked men, the impressions of the nurse upon an infant imagination remain long, nay, may never wear out; and hence the power of association in some persons over their latest hours; hence the continuing influence, during a whole life, of the early ghost and churchyard terrors. But do I speak to a sensible, to a well-informed, or firm-minded man, when I ask who, of that description, now believes in the pleasing horrors of his nursery?

No, Sir! no!—all that sorcery can no longer charm, all falls down before the transparency of experience and real knowledge. Even in poetry, as we grow old, we can scarce give fair play to the spell of the poet over the imagination, which it was the delight of our youth voluntarily to tender to his enchantments. Alas! that those happy moments should ever fleet away, and that we are now reduced, with a sigh, to repeat with an energetic poet,

"And e'en the churchyard ghost can charm no more.

"Far, however, very far is this from being the fate of religious belief, and particularly the belief of a moral Providence. Like conscience, it may be stifled, thrown aside, shunned for its inconvenience, when in the full career of pleasure, or business, politics, or war. But like conscience, it returns, and often with dreadful convictions, while the real tale of the nurse, the apparition, and the witch, continue to be defied, laughed at, and despised."

Tremaine allowed he was shaken.

"Believe me," continued Evelyn, "this is an anchoring place from which you can never drive me. Supposing your argument good, it is one of those arguments that

"Play round the head, but come not near the heart;

for, however specious, the heart contradicts it. Upon this, however, I have perhaps too long insisted, and I can only therefore repeat, that I would rather take a truth concerning the most important interests of our nature, from nature itself, than from the strongest inferences of reason *against* the voice of that nature.

"The universal consent, then, tells me that to rob or murder is a crime. Is it so or not? Will subtlety, or precedents from history (of which you have enough), prove that it is not so? The universal consent tells me that gratitude is both amiable and a duty. Is it so or not? Some philosophers, indeed, may pretend to demonstrate that it is a weakness. Suppose we even cannot demonstrate the contrary;—do we the less acknowledge it a duty?

" In this respect I am like my good Uncle Toby, who, after listening, without a power of confuting them, to a whole consistory of doctors, who all agreed, without a doubt, that a mother was no relation to her child; ' Let the learned say what they will,' cried my Uncle Toby, as they helped him down stairs, ' I cannot but think there must have been some sort of consanguinity between the Duchess of Suffolk and her son."

Tremaine smiled, and said he knew not whether Uncle Toby or the Doctor had convinced him, but he would allow much to this universal consent.

" You do well," said Evelyn, " and must, from your candour, fix at last in truth; and I know not greater truth than that spoken by nature, in the universal consent I am upholding. With such consent, with my own heart seconding it, I call this belief *intuitive* belief, and I cling to it with as much certainty as you do to *demonstration;* for if you ask, why I believe in *intuition?* I return the question with equal confidence, and ask of you, why you believe in *demonstration?"*

" The very word shows the reason," answered Tremaine.

" So does intuition," replied Evelyn. " But are you sure, as I before observed, that demonstration itself, even geometrical demonstration, does not require to be helped by, nay, I would ask, if it is not even founded upon, this intuition which you so despise?"

" Your meaning?" said Tremaine. " I have long wished you to come to this."

" The axioms," replied Evelyn, " the definitions, and postulates of Euclid."

Tremaine hesitated.

" They are all assumed as intuitive," observed Evelyn.

" They are all clear," said Tremaine.

" So is our feeling of religion," answered Evelyn. " But I know not that even your mathematical axioms are clear, although I allow their truth. The figure of a circle, with all its radii, for example, is certainly not very simple; not so simple that the proposition as to the equality of the radii should be taken for granted, without the least inquiry. Its definition, that is a figure con-

tained by one line, far from being easy, is, perhaps, of all things the most difficult to conceive, without the figure before you. Yet the whole proposition respecting a circle is considered by some as an axiom, by others as a postulate.

"What think you also of the commonest definitions, without even an attempt at demonstration, yet without which you cannot stir a step? How, by intuition, are we to conceive the definition of a line—that it has length without breadth? Still more, of a point—that it has neither parts nor magnitude? A good sceptic would say that there is no such thing. It was hence, no doubt, that Barrow, a very great mathematician as well as divine, thought that a beginner had a right to have all the axioms demonstrated."

"Were you right as to your intuition, or even your universal consent," replied Tremaine, "I might feel doubtingly as to what has hitherto appeared to me past all doubt. But the very history of religion proves you wrong."

"Explain that position," said Evelyn.

"In the first place," rejoined Tremaine, "you hold belief in religion, and particularly Providence, to be innate. Yet, with Locke, even you, and certainly myself, reject all innate ideas. I need not tell you that you agree even with Bolingbroke there, that no ideas at all can be acquired, except through the senses; consequently none can be born with us. Paley himself questions the existence of a moral sense. Your intuition, therefore, seems to be demolished."

"A very little inquiry," replied Evelyn, "will, I think, put that difficulty right. I grant you, if you please, that all ideas must be acquired through the senses; but not so the effects of those ideas upon the reason and upon the heart; and if, invariably, universally, and from the beginning of time, *after ideas have been acquired*, the opinions and feelings of all men, whether saint, savage, or sage, are to adore and to beseech some unknown and secret, but not, therefore, less demonstrable and powerful Being; to ask his protection, and believe in

him as our author and disposer; I say, if this is uniform and universal throughout the human species, *after* ideas are acquired, it is the same thing, as to the result, as if the idea was innate. I think there is a fallacy in this, that you call an idea, a moral sense, which ought rather to be called a disposition, an affection, I had almost said, a *passion*. And such, in fact, I hold true piety to be. And why a passion, if not founded in truth? Why implanted, if only to mock us? It is not so with the acknowledged passions, love, charity, or emulation. These all uniformly belong to us, yet show not themselves immediately on our births. They must be latent, as all but instinct must be latent in a child, and emphatically as love is latent, until the subject is matured for it.

"But it is enough for me that the seeds of this piety are there, to be nursed into life, to sprout and fructify, and lead to our happiness, if we please, as soon as our state is fit for it; which, thank Him who implanted it, is very soon."

"I like your explanation," said Tremaine, observing Evelyn pause, "but what then becomes of Paley's opinion against the moral sense?"

"I do not think he was so unqualifiedly against it as you seem to suppose. I remember he puts a horrible case of a son betraying a tender father to his murderers, and asks, if a wild man caught in the woods, (that is, *one who could know nothing of the relations of father and son*,) were to hear this case for the first time stated, whether he would feel the horror we do upon its recital? I own this was one of the few, the very few mistakes, which this most sagacious, and most perspicuous Divine has made in his Moral Treatise. For it is evident the wild man *could* know nothing about the matter, and the illustration, therefore, is no illustration at all."

"I think you are right as to this," observed Tremaine; "but still as to your universal consent, I repeat, the history of religion contradicts it. For, recollect the thousands, the millions of undefined notions, the corruptions, the horrible and disgusting incrustations, that hang about it; the dreadful crimes perpetrated under

pretence of sanctity; the murders, infanticides, lusts of all kinds—in short, the whole train of terrifying superstitions, that scare our hearts, and make poor reason mad! All this shows, in many instances, that we are worse than the brutes, who know not God, and that if this be religion, it were better to be without it."

"In this you anticipate me," said Evelyn; "but you will not, perhaps, think it overturns my opinion, if you consider that the horrors you have mentioned can only apply to those poor, devoted creatures who are actually thus corrupted, and are the victims of their own blindness. It will not affect the general proposition, that man is by nature religious; that is, that he has a heart prepared to second his reason, and feel God in every pulse of it, as soon as he can ask the question why and how he came here? All men will not, and, indeed, cannot answer in the same way. Some will be more rational, as well as more pious, than others. Some may be stubborn, or stupid, or indifferent, or wilfully wicked. Others may be really *bred* in indifference, either from ignorance, as savages, or the profligacy of their parents and associates, as gipsies, vagabonds, and professed thieves. But it is enough for me, that the feeling is in so great a proportion, as to be almost universal, to believe that there is a dependency of man upon God, as his creator and governor; and whether he show this by offering sacrifices, even human, or driving nails into his flesh, or fasting till he is starved, or other ten thousand modes of self-inflicted penance which history records; or whether he content himself simply with adoring, with worshipping, with confiding and loving; still my position holds, that we have almost as much intuitive proof, not only of the existence, but of the government of the world by a Creator, as we have of the mathematical axioms of Euclid themselves, about which among rational people there is no dispute. You will observe," continued Evelyn, "the qualification I make as to *rational people*, concedes more to you than you are disposed to do for us. For were I to think it fair to put you to universal suffrage, without exception, for the intuitive acceptance of *your*

axioms; were I to put them, for example, to my gipsies, rogues, and vagabonds, and demand their intuitive assent to the definition of a circle, I should, probably, have as much difficulty in obtaining it from them, as for any of my propositions regarding the existence and providence of God."

"I own," said Tremaine, taking up the last observation, "that you have gone far to satisfy me, in many things you have uttered; and, if you have not proved to my entire conviction the soundness of this argument from feeling—this position that religion, and particularly a belief in Providence, is a passion of the heart—you have at least opened a way to reason, which I shall gladly follow, till it lead me, as I hope it will, to the satisfaction I seek. I told you yesterday I was already, in this, half-converted; and I am the more sanguine, because not an impression you have described but I once felt, though nature alone, not reason, I am sure, produced it; for I speak of my youth, and almost my childhood, when the sight of the sun, a walk in a forest (as I once confessed to you), and even the mere feeling of happiness, so usual in youth, created devotion. Alas! that such pure pleasure should, after all, be false; and that reason, our noblest gift, should destroy such happy prejudice! Oh, illusion! illusion! how much better often art thou in thy fondest and most deceitful dream, than the most substantial reality!"

Evelyn eyed his friend with sympathy, and both took a turn in the walk, in something like agitation.

At length, as if recovering from a difficulty that had shaken him, Tremaine resumed the discussion.

"Yet, after all," said he, "in a matter which admits of the gravest, most profound, and often the most subtle speculation; confessedly one of extreme difficulty (witness the radical differences of the wisest heads, the deepest scholars, the most searching spirits); in a matter of this kind, is so vague a thing as feeling to decide? Can there be in anything, but particularly in morals, a less certain, and therefore a worse guide?"

"You will recollect," replied Evelyn, "that I am

deprived of our best, indeed, our infallible guide, by our agreement to confine ourselves to natural religion; and not to touch yet upon revelation. But even here, Heaven forbid that feeling, or intuition, which it more properly is, should be our only argument, our only proof!"

"Where are your others?" asked Tremaine.

"Deus est quodcunque vides!"

exclaimed Evelyn.—"Can you look around, and want them?"

"If you mean this," replied Tremaine, "as applicable to the proof of a Creator, and so far of an original provider, I have told you I cannot. No! far be from me the blindness that can question the obvious, uniform, as well as wonderful exertion of the Divinity, in all the operations of what we designate the laws of nature; far be it to deny that stupendous power which formed and balances the world, the sun, and the planets, the rise and return of the seasons, the source and conduct of vegetation—the exciter, director, and queller of the storm—he who brandishes the thunder, and prostrates Olympus; or, on the other hand, clothes the green valley with delight. All this, and a thousand other phenomena equally obvious, yet equally wonderful, are too palpably at work before my eyes, for me to doubt a moment. Were I only to see this pebble, which I throw in the air, descend constantly and seek the centre, by the same known and incomprehensible law, I should be ready to acknowledge, worship, and adore."

"You rejoice me much," cried Evelyn; and Tremaine continued:—

"Was it not Vanini, who, being accused of atheism, picked up a straw in the court, and from considering how it came there, the seed it sprang from, the different processes of nature it had undergone, until it had produced bread, and had been left what it was, made the finest refutation of the crime he was accused of that ever had been heard?"

"All this is excellent," said Evelyn.

"But, alas!" continued Tremaine, "all this stops

short, oh! how miserably short of what you believe, and what I am most desirous of believing. It proves not the necessity of a watchful *interposition* even in physics, still less in moral events. It is far from disproving that we are all of us left to our mere nature—even if our fate is not irrevocably assigned, and consequently our actions not our own. Of this I am sure, it by no means proves either a particular care of individuals in this world, or their existence and judgment in a world to come!"

"I admire the warmth of your opening," said Evelyn; "but this is a sorry conclusion."

"Would to God you could show me it was not the true one. You would speak to willing ears."

"I will at least try," pursued Evelyn: "nor have I the least objection, since you desire it, to state the *demonstrative* reasons for my own belief; reserving myself to answer objections when I know them."

"Agreed," said Tremaine.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

DIVISIONS OF PROVIDENCE.

> There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough hew them how we will.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

"I DIVIDE Providence," said Evelyn, "into three sorts—creative, sustaining, and governing. The two first of these are what are employed upon physics. The last is employed upon the actions and conduct of men, and is called particular, or moral providence."

"I like your division," said Tremaine; "but it is the last only that we are called upon to discuss."

"I rejoice that you are so satisfied upon the first," replied Evelyn; "but even as to them, are we quite agreed?"

"To use your own words, can any one doubt who looks around?" said Tremaine.

"No one in his senses," observed Evelyn. "But are we agreed as to all those attributes of the stupendous, the adorable, the benevolent Creator, which, to me, the mere contemplation of these wondrous works demonstrates? Are we agreed as to his *sustaining* the wonders he has created, by *perpetual* watchfulness, or rather operation? Are we of one mind as to his omnipotence, his eternity, his infinity, his omniscience, his omnipresence, and, above all, as to his benevolence?"

"Explain the object of these questions," said Tremaine.

"I mean," continued Evelyn, "in regard to the sustaining power, *the incessant exertion of it*, to keep things as they are; and in regard to benevolence, that kindness which wills and contrives *throughout*, as *a final end*, the happiness of his creatures."

"*Throughout, and as a final end*, are extensive words," observed Tremaine.

"They are so; but they are also of such immense importance in this discussion, that much of what I shall have to say on the question of a particular or moral Providence, will depend upon our not misunderstanding one another upon this. You will recollect, too, they are one of the data you have cited from Paley."

"Explain a little more," said Tremaine.

"Why thus: If you do not grant me that there is such a final end, and that there is also a *perpetual vigilance* to enforce what appear to be the laws of nature upon it, we may fall into great mistakes as to one another's notions. Mine, in particular, cannot be demonstrated without it, and it would be useless to proceed without settling this great preliminary."

"To what a field are you leading!" said Tremaine; "for you open the whole question of the existence, the origin, and the extent of evil."

"It is you who will open it, if opened at all," replied Evelyn; "for my part, I am so perfectly content with the immense preponderance of good in the world, as to

feel little real difficulty in regard to our question, from the concomitant evil that certainly belongs to it."

"I wish to hear more of your argument, before I hazard anything," said Tremaine.

"My argument is," proceeded the Doctor, "that where there is so much contrivance, and, therefore, so much design for our good, in the creative, and so much incessant vigilance to preserve it, in the *sustaining* Providence, it is impossible rationally to conceive that God abandons us altogether in morals; or that morals, any more than physics, could sustain themselves without his perpetual unremitting influence. This has been often said, and often, I allow, taken upon trust; but to feel it in our hearts, so as to be full of it; to feed upon it as our best mental nourishment; to make it our daily bread; to rely upon it as our anchor; in short, to cling to it with habitual fondness, and, at the same time, reverential awe, —this is what constitutes genuine piety. But all this, even as to physics, requires a more intimate acquaintance with the different processes of nature, than all of us can command. If the feeling is not happily interwoven in our dispositions, as it is with many favoured, though simple people (certainly not philosophers), experiment, study, and reflection are necessary to imbue us properly with the important conviction. Hence my seeming still to dwell upon the attributes of the Deity which I have mentioned, before I proceed farther, although you were willing and prompt to grant me all I asked."

"Detail me this a little more," said Tremaine.

"The detail would lead us too far," pursued Evelyn; "but my meaning shortly is, that the more we study the wonders of nature, the more correct, as well as reverential, will be our notions of its Author; and this, whether we dazzle ourselves with his magnificence, and prostrate ourselves with awe before his overwhelming power; or contemplate him in all the minute and intricate, yet most exact adaptation of means to ends, which are often, nay perhaps oftenest, so fine as to be invisible to sense, without the help of a microscope. The whole

history of nature, whether as to design or execution, is but one picture of wonder, of wisdom, of sublimity, of beauty, but especially of contrivance; and all with a view to happiness, or, if not all, the exception is either too trifling to mention, or is explicable, upon the ground that a partial evil may be a general good. No workmen, however expert, can ever, either in simplicity, ingenuity, or power, come near the contrivances of the eye, of the ear, or of the joints, to be found in anatomy. No human wisdom could ever reach the suitableness of means with purpose, shown by instinct. A spider, or a silkworm, moved the adoration of Boyle more even than the sun; and Boyle's was not a mind to take things upon trust. A bee, or an ant, confutes an atheist! The beaver proves skill, more than a human architect; the cable and anchor of a muscle excite wonder more than those of a ship*. Gravity, effluvia, attraction of cohesion, the magnet, the dipping and the variations of the needle, all show that an active, *superintending* or sustaining power is *always* at work."

The Doctor paused, which Tremaine perceiving, besought him to go on, assuring him he listened with gratified attention.

Evelyn resumed: "But it is 'the heavens that declare the glory of God, and the firmament that showeth his handy-work. There is neither speech nor language; but their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world.'

"I know no proofs more cogent than these, to convince a doubting man of the poverty and darkness of his scepticism; for, to use less sublime, but still beautiful language, who can behold 'this brave o'erhanging firmament, this most excellent canopy the air, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire;' these spangled wonders, these lucid orbs—who can behold this, and not bow down in wonder, and worship? It is not the mere

* The muscle spins a thread, and is able to fasten it to rocks under water, in order to keep itself from being washed off in rough weather.

brightness or beauty of the illumination, the silver mantle of the moon, or the golden splendour of the sun (though so glorious that we cannot look at him), that constitute them such powerful, such irresistible witnesses of God's *sustaining* Providence! It is his moving them as he does with such celerity, facility, precision, and regularity, such as the finest mechanism, founded upon the deepest knowledge of geometry, cannot reach: it is the felicitous result, working all day, all night, and for ever, for our advantage, our safety, and our pleasure; it is this that especially proves the deepest (I had almost said) *anxiety* to protect and *provide* for the being he has given us. Whoever has watched the stars, particularly the planets, with their moons, moving as they do, seemingly in inextricable mazes, yet unravelling themselves by means of two most opposing forces, the centrifugal and centripetal, so as to form an almost standing miracle:—whoever has considered this, must, from this alone, feel his soul filled with a piety and awe, that make him turn with horror from his own scepticism, if ever he yielded to it."

"Your argument upon all this!" said Tremaine.

"Why, that with such nicety of construction to move and govern such ponderous wonders as are constructed; to avoid such terrible dangers, such destruction, as may befall the smallest accident or irregularity in the system, nothing short of perpetual and most benevolent vigilance—in short, my *sustaining* Providence—can preserve us a single hour."

"Yet, the original laws of physics seem enough for this purpose," observed Tremaine; "they are never known to fail."

"I should not think so, were your last observation a fact," replied Evelyn. "But the very appearances of monsters, and what are called *lusus naturæ*, might with some make the fact disputable. Appearances of ruin have also been supposed to have been seen in some of the heavenly bodies themselves. All, therefore, conduce to this one great point, the fact of incessant vigilance, which all reason justifies; while, on the other

hand (and I desire you to mark it as of most essential consequence to the argument), all that you oppose to it is the merest and most absolute assumption."

"Is it assumption, then, to say that there are laws of physics?"

"Certainly not. But I would remind you of the wholesome rule, not more modest than wise, that of these laws you know absolutely nothing, except as they appear from experiment, liable to be supported or contradicted at every new process; and hence the very name for natural, is synonymous with experimental philosophy."

"This is true," said Tremaine.

"Be cautious, then," proceeded Evelyn, "how you travel out of it. Yet this you do in a manner most unphilosophical, with all your philosophy, when you dispose of a whole subject, and that subject so vast, so full of the

"Varieties of untried being,

and coolly say of such stupendous things, that the original laws of physics, of which you scarcely know anything, seem enough for the purpose; in other words, that God having imposed you know not what laws, separates himself from their subject, and thinks of them no more."

"There is much in this," said Tremaine.

"I beseech you, therefore, to consider it throughout our whole question," proceeded Evelyn, "for it is of more consequence to what I perceive will be your argument than you are aware of."

"Proceed," cried Tremaine, attentively; and Evelyn went on:—

"But to the heavens I need not confine myself, for all nature bears the same witness; only the universality, or, as I may say, the commonness of the proof, makes the most wonderful operations, and even blessings of God, pass by unheeded, and himself unthanked. How seldom does any one feel (if I may so call it) the *religion* of the spring. Yet, if we were to behold her for the first time, bursting forth with all her buds and promises, what

heart could withstand it? what head not bow? what knee not bend in adoration of the Power that made, and governed, and brought her to perfection? It is hence, that, with not more justness than happiness, Milton says, whoever neglects to visit the country in the spring, and rejects the pleasure of its first bloom and fragrance, is guilty of '*sullenness*' against nature."

"Beautifully said!" observed Tremaine.

"That, however, which is common," proceeded Evelyn, "excites no admiration, and while we avail ourselves daily and hourly of the most refined, skilful, and profound contrivances of the Deity, for our protection and happiness, we regard them as nothing in the religion of nature —we think them even our due. The great bulk of mankind are, I fear, in this state of indifference; and as the menial at a pump passes through a whole life, and would through a thousand, without ever trying to make out how it is that the sucker lifts what she wants from so great a depth; so, from that same familiarity, we use the other good things of the world, without inquiring how they came there. Yet all, beyond contradiction, is manifestly Providence, *perpetually* and *vigilantly* at work, throughout the vast and boundless regions of space, above, below, and around; nor is there a moment of intermission—although the awful, yet benevolent Operator and Guardian is invisible to sense, and only known to reason from the benevolent effects produced."

Perceiving Tremaine about to speak, Evelyn went on with quickness:—

"You will tell me again, these are what you call the mere laws of nature, and are evidence only of the original creation, not the constant operation of God, in physics. My argument is, it is not less his constant work, his constant bounty, his constant goodness, because he has reduced his own operation, as it were, to a system, which we call nature, *but the secret means of which we none of us understand.* But, exclusive of this, all his attributes are demonstrated by it in a manner that comes so home to our senses, that if we think at all, we must feel sure that he is everywhere in us, and with us; that we

cannot move, think, or act without him; that he is in our hearts, our souls, and even our bodies; that nothing comes near us, nothing happens, whether we will it or not, but that he knows, suffers, and might prevent it, if he pleased. Whether he please or not, is, I know, your great question. My position in this place is, that, *prima facie*, nothing can be done without him; my inference (unless there are objections which cannot be answered), *everything is done with him.* He therefore is not only the original author of all our good, all our happiness, all our safety, but without him we should continue to have neither good, nor happiness, nor safety. He at least *can* ward off evil when it threatens, and if he does not, it must be for some purpose of his own, into which it would be as presuming as useless to inquire. The consequence is plain: he who is so perpetually employed in preserving to us the ends of our being, cannot do it by halves. If he does it in physics, he will, he must do it in morals.

"Now there is this distinction between man and brute, that the one has a moral, as well as physical being; that the first is even the most important, the most noble of the two. Need I ask you if it is possible to believe that the Providence we speak of should take so much pains, and exert so much wisdom about the one, and totally neglect the other?"

Here Evelyn stopt, as if absorbed in the immensity and awfulness of his contemplations, nor did he seem disposed immediately to resume the chain of his discourse.

Tremaine also paused; but at length, breaking silence, he observed —

"I have listened to you with a pleasure which even my disagreement with you on many points could not interrupt. In much of what you have said, indeed, there is little difference between us. I never denied the providing wisdom with which, from their admirable structure and faculties, all the immediate ends of the vast variety of being we see around us are accomplished. *I* also am ready to adore the wonderful and magnificent, which is everywhere to be seen in the works of the Author of nature. But that he cares for us on that account, so as

to *interpose* in our actions, is not to me made out. On the contrary, everything we see in our miserable history shows, to my conception, that *once having placed us in the system*, whatever it is, which he has so wonderfully designed, he leaves us there to the guardianship of such laws as he has imposed upon his creation: and as he abandons the material or brute world (those fine trees, and those ruminating herds, for example) to the laws of vegetation, and the operations of their instinct, by which they exist during their appointed time, so he leaves man to the government of his reason, and the struggle between that and his passions, to fulfil as well as he can (and as upon the whole perhaps he *does* fulfil), the purposes of his being. With the rest of your demonstration, and with most of what you have said upon the attributes of the Deity, I am not disposed to quarrel."

"To what extent do you admit?" asked Evelyn; "for much will depend upon it."

"Everything as to power," answered Tremaine.

"Omnipotence, therefore?"

"Yes,"

"Omniscience?"

"Yes."

"Omnipresence?"

"Yes."

"The creation!"

"Certainly, yes!"

"And yet you deny that he cares for the works, the stupendous works he *has* created."

"Not so: say rather he has given them sufficient supports in the laws of their being, that govern them."

"I thought I had cautioned you," said Evelyn, "against this assumed, this unprecise, I might say, this unmeaning proposition. It is strange that with such a logical understanding, with even such stiffness in requiring demonstrated proof of things before you will stir a step in other matters, you are so comfortably satisfied with this, the most important, the most difficult, the most indeterminate of all assumptions, as an answer to the most momentous of all questions! That there may be some

operations of nature with which we are partially acquainted, so uniform in their course that we not unreasonably think them under the government of a regular agency, and thence *by analogy* call them laws—this is true. But who or what the *agent* is—whether the Deity himself, or ministering sub-agents—I conclude you do not know."

"Certainly not," said Tremaine.

"As little of the intention and end of very few, if any, of the phenomena with which we are acquainted."

"Agreed."

"Still less with the operations, or, if you will, the laws, and least of all, with the thousand millions of modes of matter which may exist, but which have never yet challenged our acquaintance."

"Of course," said Tremaine.

"Confess, then, my friend," continued Evelyn, gravely, "this is no trifling matter, and that to assume for granted a mere fine-sounding proposition, as disposing of a subject so vast and vital that it awes us to approach it, is neither very logical, nor very safe."

"I allow this," said Tremaine.

"The most flippant ignorance," added Evelyn, "could not do more. You may suppose I do not put this personally to you, for ours is at least a reverential inquiry."

"Undoubtedly," observed Tremaine.

"Then, my dear friend, I beseech you not to get rid of a question so vital to your happiness, both here and hereafter, by supposing that answered which is not answered; by giving me words instead of meaning—a phrase instead of argument. When you tell me of the *laws* of our being, do you know half of them yourself, or what relations the known may bear to the unknown? It is hence the sagacious Butler holds that the only distinct meaning of the word *natural* is *stated, fixed,* or *settled,* but that there must be innumerable things at present carrying on of which we are ignorant, and in comparison of which (to use his emphatic word), what we know is *but a point.*

"When you talk then of the purposes of the Supreme Being, and confess yourself totally ignorant of those purposes, is it enough to say that reason and passion conjoined enable us to fulfil them? Fulfil what? You cannot answer.

"Again, when you say, being *fixed in a system, whatever it is*, we are left to the laws of it, *knowing nothing of either system or laws*, is this, can this be accepted as a satisfactory account of anything, much less of such a subject as the relations between God and man?"

Tremaine was a little struck, and said he meant not these consequences.

"And yet," replied Evelyn, "it is thus you stave off the searching questions I have asked; for with this happy solution, that the Creator has given his creation *laws*, you hold that, though omniscient and for ever present, for ever keeping the creation in sight, and therefore I should say, for ever watching over it, he yet abandons or throws it on one side, as if he had nothing more to do with it; like a workman who performs a task, of which, when finished, he thinks no farther. Is this your firm, your reasonable belief? *Can* it be your belief?"

"I allow you press this hard," said Tremaine; "yet my meaning seems too well founded. For surely nothing was ever more distinct than physical and moral Providence; than the care of body and the care of mind; than the laws of vegetation, or of motion, and the motives of human conduct; in short, to speak of animals alone, than the government by instinct, and the government by reason."

"And yet," said Evelyn, calmly, "the author of the one is the author of the other; the creator and disposer of animals, the creator and disposer of men. Stript of the pomp of language about laws and systems, you cannot show me that God is not always busy, if I may so say, with the conduct of nature, with the course of vegetation, and the operations of instinct. If he is so, show me why he should perpetually watch over instinct, and not over reason. Is it because the latter is infallible, the former not? Is it because he loves a brute, and not a man?"

Tremaine felt pushed in the argument, and allowed it was not so.

"Is it, then," pursued Evelyn, "because we are so good, so perfect, so invariably prudent, temperate, and just; so merciful to one another, so obedient and studious of God's will, that we are never in want of aid from a higher power? Is there really no such thing as moral evil, or does natural evil so greatly exceed it, as to require this aid alone? Alas! does it even equal the moral?"

Tremaine was silent for some moments, when he said, thoughtfully, "Explain a little more what you mean by *sustaining*."

"Perhaps it is a little necessary," continued Evelyn, "because those who have treated of the subject at large, have not, I think, sufficiently insisted on it.

"By the *sustaining* Providence, then, I mean that it was not enough, at the creation, to settle an order of things, with certain laws for their government, and then leave them to their fate; but that the great Author, as I think it appears from all phenomena, *continues to be perpetually operating*. Observe, I do not mean as if casually, or even periodically, superintending something liable to fall out of order, and therefore at hand to put it in repair, if necessary; but an *incessant*, actual agency and operation, to continue, as well as originally to produce, all or most of what we see or know. This has sometimes been called a *perpetual creation;* and hence both Newton and Clarke supposed that God *continued* to be everywhere, and in everything; or to speak after the manner of men, to be perpetually *employed*, as it were, in enforcing and upholding what we, for mere convenience, call the laws of nature,—not that there really are such laws."

"Not really such laws!" exclaimed Tremaine, in surprise; "this is downright paradox."

"Yet it may be, nay is, the exact truth," replied Evelyn, "or at least much nearer the truth, to suppose gravity, for example, the effect of the *unremitting* activity of the Deity, as these great men supposed it, than to believe with you that the Deity merely, as it were, gave

a *fiat* for his work, and there left it. Possibly all attraction is the effect of the same unremitting exertion; and Addison inclined to the same opinion as to instinct."

Tremaine became pensive, and said, "I should like these opinions of the great names you have mentioned a little more enlarged upon."

"You will find their whole argument," answered Evelyn, "admirably put by Baxter in his work (incomparable for argument), on the soul."

"I have read that work," answered Tremaine, "yet do not recollect to have been so impressed with it."

"You had preconceived opinions to break through, and felt not its force," replied Evelyn. "But for this, with your acuteness, I should think you must have seen it in all its light."

"Could you bring it now to recollection?" asked Tremaine.

"I will endeavour," replied his friend.

"For the most part then their opinion arises out of their deep discussions concerning the origin and laws of motion. Des Cartes you know held that there was always the same quantity of motion in the world. The atheists, and those who opposed the doctrine of Providence, were glad of this, because it helped them at least in their endeavours to get rid of the most powerful, the most unanswerable argumeut there is for the immateriality of the Deity, drawn from the passive nature of matter, and the impossibility of its being itself the cause of motion. They had indeed still the difficulty to contend with, of accounting for the origination of motion in matter; but once allow there was no addition to it throughout the efflux of time, and much other and consequent difficulty was eluded. The whole of this, however, was in a moment destroyed by Newton*, Clarke, and Boyle, who show irrefragably that so far from the quantum of motion continuing the same, its natural tendency, from the very nature of matter, from its total want of activity, its passiveness, the stoppages from attrition, and other causes,

* Newton's Optics. Clarke's Attrib.

is regularly to *decrease:* so that at last, if left to itself, it would entirely cease."

"And how do they remedy this?" asked Tremaine.

"By the supposition, or, I may almost call it, the demonstration I have mentioned, that the Divine Power, either immediately of itself, or mediately by ministering agents, is ever at work at those processes, which, for convenience in explaining phenomena, you, allowably I admit, call the laws of nature. Gravity, as I observed, is one, indeed the principal, of these unintermitting processes, by which all things are kept in their places; and other attractions, that of cohesion particularly, fermentation, heat, and all the various causes of motion we see, are, according to them, all under the same perpetual *unceasing* guidance."

"And yet, is this more than bold supposition?" observed Tremaine.

"For bold, say reasonable," replied Evelyn; "reasonable if only in this,—that but for this *perpetual operation* of the spiritual power, it is even a contradiction to think that mere brute, passive, inert matter, could occasion the changes we see. Reasonable also from another, even still more powerful argument, that all these which you call laws, are *arbitrary*, that is, that to our comprehension, there is no one reason for them, arising out of the nature of matter."

"I know not what you here mean by arbitrary," said Tremaine.

"Why, this," answered Evelyn; "it has been demonstrated, you know, as a fact, that the attraction of gravity decreases as the squares of the distances increase. Now, what has matter, a mere passive substance, incapable of motion, thought, will, or anything but a susceptibility of being acted upon—what has matter to do with such a nice and complicated rule as this? Hence, I remember Baxter, speaking of this very rule, well observes. 'The constancy of these effects is the reason why we fancy them the action of matter upon matter, but the constancy of an effect is no mark of the *necessity* of it, but of something else. It is an unaccountable

prejudice,' he goes on to say, 'that *no designing cause* but such a passive and necessary one as matter, *could* observe such regularity and proportion*.' So far Baxter. Clarke is even still more determinate."

"Go on, if you can remember him," said Tremaine. "I am fixed in attention."

"He makes some such observation as this," continued Evelyn: "All things that are done in the world, are done either immediately by God himself, or by created intelligent beings, *matter being not at all capable of any laws or powers whatsoever*, any more than of intelligence, excepting only this one negative power, that every part of it will always necesarily continue in the same state of motion or rest wherein it happens to be. So that all those things which we commonly say are the effects of the *natural powers* of matter and laws of motion; of *gravitation, attraction*, or the like; are indeed (if we will speak strictly and properly), the effects of God's acting upon matter, *continually and every moment*, either immediately by himself, or mediately by some created intelligent being; consequently, *there is no such thing as what men commonly call the course of nature, or the power of nature.* The course of nature, truly and properly speaking, is nothing else but the will of God, producing certain effects in a continued, regular, constant, and uniform manner; which course, or manner of acting, being in every moment perfectly *arbitrary*, is as easy to be altered at any time as to be preserved †."

"I now see what you mean by arbitrary," said Tremaine, "and the conclusions you would draw from it. Being arbitrary, you boldly assert that the real properties of matter have nothing to do with attraction or other motion, but all is the mysterious junction of some other power acting in, but separate from what is called matter."

"You, at least, conceive me," returned Evelyn, "with sufficient exactness, but the conclusions are not mine, but those of the profound men I have mentioned."

* Baxter on the Soul, vol. i. p. 96.
† Clarke on the Attrib., part ii. p. 300, ed. 4.

"Yet I did not understand them to go thus far when I read them," observed Tremaine.

"I repeat," said Evelyn, "you lay under preconceived opinions, and did not give them the attention they deserved. As for Clarke, he is very clear and full, for he expressly says, that as matter is itself incapable of obeying any laws, the *very original laws of motion themselves cannot continue to take place* but by *something* superior to matter, *continually* exerting on it a certain force, according to such determinate laws. Hence, he adds, that the bodies of plants or animals could not be formed by mere matter, according to any general laws of motion; and gravitation itself could not be the result of motion impressed upon matter, but must be caused by something which penetrates all bodies, and *continually* puts forth in them a power entirely different from that by which matter acts upon matter. Hence, says he, it depends *every moment* upon some superior Being for the preservation of its frame, *perpetually* and *actually* exerting itself every moment, in every part of the world*. Baxter, enlarging upon this, adds, that the minutest office in the economy of nature is incessantly performed by the finger of the Almighty, whose power is still *working near* us, *round* us, *within* us, and *in* every part of us; and to say he hath lodged in matters certain powers whereby events are to be directed, is but one degree removed from Epicurean necessity †."

"These are all high notions," said Tremaine, "and big, I allow, with the most important consequences in support of your great argument. I allow, too, I have by no means sufficiently considered them, but have talked of laws of physics as others have done—that is, without much inquiry beyond the absolute practical experiment. But I am not yet able to tell myself that the heavenly bodies you have vouched with so much reverence, as denoting the immediate power of the Deity, do not roll

* Clarke on the Attributes, part ii. p. 16.
† Baxter on the Soul, pp. 99, 100.

through their orbits in consequence of some law imposed at their creation."

"It is the regularity of their motions, as I have observed," replied Evelyn, "that makes you not unnaturally think this. Yet, search to the bottom, and see what there is in matter that can clothe itself with such a complication of motion. How, for example, will you account for the centrifugal and centripetal forces I have mentioned, acting upon the planets at the same time with such conflicting powers? The one drives them forward always in a straight line: the other always forces them to seek a centre; and this extraordinary, I may say, miraculous counteraction, occasions the stupendous wonder of their orbit. But were I to ask you how attraction merely (supposing it a demonstrable property of matter, which I deny), could force the same body to fly off and fly on at the same time,—you, perhaps, would find it difficult to tell me."

"I should," said Tremaine.

"Yet this difficulty attends the whole course of those infinite processes of nature, throughout the varieties of the creation, which you are so content to think you understand, under the sweeping phrase of the laws of physics. See, therefore, to what an extent of credulity scepticism can carry its belief, when necessary for its purpose! how devoted it can be to mere system, and philosophic jargon, in the very moment when in its self-sufficiency it ridicules us for what it calls our facility, our proneness to believe things on mere authority! Which of the two deserves the ridicule, I am content to let others judge."

"I beseech you to proceed," said Tremaine.

"This perpetual operation and necessity for the *unceasing* sustentation of things by the Deity, and which I have therefore called the *sustaining Providence*, is by no means a new doctrine, for I find it in the acute old Suarez*, who pushed the notion so far, as to hazard the

* He was Professor of Theology at Coimbra, in the 16th century.

supposition that if this perpetual operation relaxed an instant—so little had the world been left to itself, and its laws—all would fall to pieces."

Tremaine again thought this novel, and owned how worthy it was of consideration.

"I remember," continued Evelyn, "Sherlock seems afraid the idea of a perpetually acting and sustaining Providence might be thought too subtle. I own it is not so to me. I confess my inability to comprehend, much less confide in, that doctrine which supposes the Creator, when he made the world, with all its movements and wonders, to have wound it up like the machine of a human artificer, and then tossed it out of his hands, till it should go down of itself, or at least returning to it when it wanted winding up again. I pause to know if this is your opinion?"

Tremaine said he was not prepared to go so far.

"At the same time," added he, "let me explain my former opinion to you, shaken I allow, but still dwelling in me. For till I can revolve this most important doctrine more exactly than at present, I must continue to say, I am not at all sure that even in regard to moral evil, as well as physical instinct, man is not competent to continue his existence in the manner in which it subsists, without requiring this perpetual aid, or even any part of it, which you say is so necessary."

"Do you allow the aid, if it *is* necessary?" asked Evelyn; "and do you admit that the power is at hand when wanted, able and willing to exert itself?"

"I know not that I can gainsay this," returned Tremaine.

"Then," inquired Evelyn, "you allow the perpetual presence of the Creator, his inspection, his knowledge of all that passes, and his power of influencing all; but deny his *will* to do so?"

"I think you push this too far," replied Tremaine; "that he who created me must know how I act, is not to be contested. Why he created me baffles conjecture. I have in vain endeavoured to unravel it. That I have a very mixed sort of being, composed of good and bad,

is clear; that if the bad preponderate, all will in time be lost, is equally plain; but that we have, however, lasted a long while with this sort of being, also that this has been without any visible assistance, without anything more than our own resources, seems no more than true."

"That would apply also to your laws of physics, which you know I have combated," said Evelyn; "but go on."

Tremaine continued: "True, there have been great shocks in the world, great crimes and desolations; nations as well as men have sometimes acted like demons, and things have seemed to approach to universal destruction. But all has got right again, by the exertions of the same individual creature, that brought all so near to annihilation.

"In the same manner, therefore, as sometimes whole countries have been convulsed, and their inhabitants swept off by earthquake and pestilence, and yet have recovered and even attained to security and order; so morals have been restored, the waste of life repaired, crime departed from, and comparative happiness re-established. Yet all this seems to have been done by man alone, merely acting in his nature, according to those general principles given originally for that nature's government. The immediate cause of all has been ascertained, whether of the convulsion, or recovery; it has been human, not divine; we have seen or heard of no ministering angel to restore, no more than infernal spirit to destroy. Everything is explicable upon human principles, and though the Almighty must certainly have been informed, yet (barring revelation, which you know we exclude from our question), no where that I know of has his finger appeared in the way of interposition. In short, you see I come to those lines of Pope, now indeed grown trite, but which still emphatically express what I mean:—

> "If plagues and earthquakes break not Heaven's design,
> Why then a Borgia or a Catiline?

"In one sense, virtually, all may be said to be the work of the Deity, because he *originally created us* with

all these aptitudes for good and for evil. But it has been often, and I think cogently remarked, that it is questioning his own power to suppose, that when he thought fit to create what we may call *a nature*, he did it in so imperfect a manner, that he should himself be compelled to the perpetual employment of *sustaining* it. It is more for his honour, and surely more consistent with the fact, as exhibited in history, that upon the whole we are able to sustain ourselves with the strength which it pleased him originally to give us. 'Dieu merci, et mes gros bataillons,' was the expression of Frederick, when he had gained a victory. I allow the sentiment was loose and ungrateful, and the sneer impious; but were there any means of knowing vouchsafed to this infidel king, that more than the arm of flesh had made him victor?

"Charlemagne, Alfred, and Peter the Great comparatively raised their countries from the grossest barbarism. Augustus gave peace to a world that seemed rent to pieces from one end to the other. Bonaparte, by an iron tyranny, was the only one who could put an end to a convulsion that threatened all society. He himself became a disturber that filled us with fear. He himself was put down by the energy of statesmen, and the valour of heroes. Were I to go farther into the history of the corruption of morals, such as belongs to the Italian states, as they are pourtrayed in Guicciardini and Machiavel; were I to talk of Borgia or Alexander, of the poisonings, stabbings, treasons, incests, parricides, and fratricides, that fill us everywhere with horror in those stories; were I to extend this to the private lives of the still more ancient Romans, the universal lubricity of their females, known and gloried in by their very worship; or were there time to quit Europe, and discuss the cruelties, the infamous treacheries, the wanton waste of life, the vile depravities that characterise Asiatic manners and policy, the acts of an Ali Pacha, for instance—the day were too short to describe the seeming misery of mankind. It would almost justify the conclusion, that the history of man is the history of a wild beast; we should shrink with horror from

this account of ourselves; we might despair, lie down, and die?"

"This is a horrible picture!" cried Evelyn.

"Is it overcharged?" asked Tremaine. His friend bade him go on.

"The times," continued Tremaine, "nay, nature herself, seem out of joint, when these miseries prevail; yet the remedies are all palpable, all simple, all understood. I see no providing power at work, either to invent or apply them.

"Thus much for general history. To come to humbler things: We bolt and bar, and the robber knowing this, comes not near, or if he attempt to break in, is foiled. A believer in Providence (and I envy him) thanks Heaven for it;—a philosopher thinks it is merely prudence."

At this instant, Tremaine was interrupted by the sound of voices in full chant, ascending from the fields below. They were male and female, and though coarse and uninstructed enough, the harmony, which was grave, and appertaining to sacred, floated not unpleasingly through the air.

It was a priest, followed by peasants of both sexes, whom, upon looking out, the friends observed making a progress through the ripening corn-fields. Every now and then they stopped to join in a short prayer; then moving on, with a priest at their head, renewed the chant. The whole was an agreeable, and even to Tremaine, an interesting scene.

In fact, he alone, from having witnessed it before, understood its meaning. It was a procession which at this time of the year, as well as at seed-time, the Roman Catholic peasants sometimes were fond of making, through the new-sown or ripening fields, imploring of Providence that their labour might be blessed.

"Who can blame them?" said Evelyn, when he was informed of it.

"Not I, certainly," said Tremaine; "but let us suppose a farmer a little more philosophic than these. He tills his land by the sweat of his brow, he dresses it at

great expense, he spreads his seed, and it sprouts; he gathers a great crop, and he rejoices. But should he say, 'had I not toiled, and understood my art, I should have got nothing; as it is, I have reaped what God originally promised me when he made the earth to be cultivated, and me to cultivate it, and the seasons he originally ordained have fulfilled their design.' Should he say this, without thinking the Creator had interposed, or done more than he did at the creation, could I blame him?"

"I think you would not do well to approve him," said Evelyn, "if only for the hardness of his heart. His blindness might possibly be excused."

"Has he not, then, a right to the fruits of his toil?" asked Tremaine.

"Alas! my friend," answered Evelyn, with some eagerness, "I grieve at your question. Have we, then, such a *right* to the good things with which God, for the most part, blesses our labour? Are we so excellent, so pure, and immaculate, so powerful, and self-sufficing, I might also say, so self-creating, that because we cannot acquire blessings without labour, they are, therefore, no blessings at all? Believe me, good friend, you have absolutely shocked me by your question, which is not worthy the kind heart I know you to possess."

Tremaine was somewhat moved at this apostrophe, and not the less so, because he owned that he had had moments when the sentiment he had uttered appeared no more than a dictate of reason.

"Of reason!" said Evelyn, "which so often and so miserably extinguishes feeling, and when it does so, loses its very character of reason.

"In the point before us, for instance," continued he, "what can be less rational, less I may even say informed, than your whole view of the subject we are upon? As if Providence really intended us to lie on our backs and let food drop into our mouths! As if labour, even with Providence to help us, was not the *very scheme for our existence*, the very lot and character of our being, and still a gracious and a happy one!

" You will be affronted, perhaps, if I remind you of the countryman in the fable, who besought Hercules to take his wagon out of the slough for him, and was called a lazy rascal for his pains."

" Surely I am not so puerile," cried Tremaine.

" You mean not to be so, but to this your whole question tends, in this it finishes, and the fable is the best answer I can return to it. But, exclusive of this, I think you have mistaken what I mean by *sustaining*, in this your application of it. You have answered as if I thought prayer was to move God to bless the land by a sort of *temporary* interposition. My meaning is, that the effect is a perpetual, an unceasing operation of the divine energy. And I mean this, as I have meant everything, to show that where the benevolence is so perpetual in physics, it cannot be withdrawn in morals, and hence that God is there also."

The conversation here paused, when Evelyn resumed. " As to the ingratitude. . . . . ."

" I beseech you, spare me," cried Tremaine. " I am ashamed of my question, ashamed of the argument I would have founded upon it. I cannot tell you why of a sudden I see the thing so differently, for I have, I am sorry to say, long been a victim to this hardness of heart. Immersed in pleasure, in ambition, in short, in the world, I own I thought we had at least a right to be what we are, and because it was our nature, never thought that it might be our nature to be otherwise. What most astonishes me, however, is, that if this new view was not to spring up in myself, it should come from you,—when I have resisted the feeling recommended by the sweetest voice, the most engaging language, and the purest heart that ever belonged to a human creature: I mean my lovely instructress, my Georgina, at whose feet I long this moment to make my confession, that in this, at least, I am changed. Would to God I could say in everything!"

" Take time, my friend," said Evelyn, with a coolness that was contrasted with Tremaine's warmth. " Your candour delights me; and, probably, this opening may let in many other concessions.'

"But how could I resist Georgina?" exclaimed Tremaine.

"Possibly you were thinking more of her face than her argument," replied Evelyn, smiling. "More probably your own mind had not been so prepared as now by the many discussions we have had. Had this been so, she probably would have convinced you also of the fallacy of one or two other tenets you have not been able yourself to detect."

"I am not aware of them," said Tremaine.

"Of course not. Yet you take for granted as if proved, what no philosopher whatever, no inhabitant of this world can ever prove,—that it was the design of the Creator, in making it, to make a perfect work, or at least one that could suffice to itself without farther assistance from him. Here you have begged a question which all nature in physics, and all history in morals deny. Your supposition, that what the pious man calls providential in addition to his prudence, the philosopher has a right to call prudence merely, is another assumption, which would go farther than even you would intend to carry it: for, as well might you say that instinct, and not God, occasioned animals to act as they do; nay, that a tree grows from the laws that govern vegetation; not from him who made those laws.

"You say that it is less for God's honour, nay, that it is questioning his power when he created a nature, that he should make it so imperfect as to require his perpetual aid in sustaining it. But I set out with observing that I meant not a superintending aid to things that might get out of order, *but a perpetual operation in continuing them.* Now the whole frame and fabric of the original creation, but particularly of the moral part of it, demonstrate that imperfection is its universal *intended* attribute.

"According to you everything is sufficient. One would suppose, therefore, in this all-sufficing assemblage of created beings, some one or other would, at least, exhibit no deficiency, no want. Yet show me the creature, animate, or inanimate, that might not in some way or

another, according to our notions, be improved. The very term creature, or created, implies imperfection, and the existence of that very evil of which you make so much use against the providence of God, demonstrates that imperfection, deficiency, and consequent want of relief are of the very essence of created existence. What, for example, so imperfect, who so poor, naked, or defenceless, as the head of it? what so defective, standing alone, as man?

"Everything, therefore, contradicts you in your supposition, and supports us when we say, that the very design of the Deity in creating this part of the universe, seems to have been the forming for his own (*to us inscrutable*) *purposes*, a set of dependent, weak beings, whose essence and characteristic are, to hang upon him for everything, and to want his aid at every step, because composed of elements which, left to themselves (I speak both of physics and morals), could never hold together a moment."

This argument staggered Tremaine, who confessed that his assertion, indeed, was incompatible with one of the chief difficulties which had inclined him to his scepticism;—to which he would now come.

"I mean," said he, "the difficulty that arises from that horrible train of never-ending evils, both natural and moral, which we are doomed to encounter from the moment we enter the world. No! it should seem we were not meant to suffice to ourselves; yet I am staggered to know what else sufficeth for us. The evils I have mentioned are such as, at least, no Providence seems to avert, no innocence to escape. On the contrary, bad men but too often, nay, generally, are exalted, while innocence is trodden under foot; nor can anything be more false than the first and most earnest lesson we teach our children, or the favourite doctrine inculcated from the pulpit, that if we are good we shall prosper. I will not say that the contrary *only* is true, but it is at least so often so, and blood-stained crime has so frequently triumphed, while the most meek and patient virtue has

expired under tortures, that one would almost as soon confess the heresy of the Manichees, as the far-famed apophthegms —

" Whatever is is right ;

or,

" Virtue alone is happiness below.

" In short, I subscribe to the sentiment of Seneca,

" Deorum crimen Sylla tam felix ;

to think that he, with all his murders, should live, while Socrates was put to death, might stagger a saint."

" For all this," said Evelyn, seeing Tremaine pause, " I was prepared, as well as for many other particular instances of unrewarded misery and unpunished guilt, which have often moved me, almost as much as I see they have you."

" History is full of them," pursued Tremaine, " and so glaringly, that the blood has boiled within me to think of them merely as events. But to think of them, coupled with the doctrine, that all have been under guidance from above——alas ! it is more than the intellect can bear, to suppose God's honour so insulted ! Here, therefore, your opinion of perpetual superintendence is still more impugned than I had thought it by the notion, that nature in all things was meant to suffice for itself; and I willingly give up the one, the better to make use of the other."

" This is at least adroit," said Evelyn ; " but go on."

" I felt disposed," pursued Tremaine, " to give you a few examples of the moral evil that has scourged the world, but the year would not suffice. One or two, as specimens of a thousand classes, will be enough. As a churchman, I would ask you to explain the horror of the fate of the greatest, most holy, and most sublime of the prophets, Isaiah. When I think that all the favour of Heaven ended in his being suffered to be sawed asunder between two planks, by the reprobate king he was sent to reclaim, what can I say to the impiety (for it is no less) of supposing that Providence was here ?

" What think you of Nero and Seneca? The whole history, indeed, of the first Cæsars is a shuddering from beginning to end.

" You mentioned Louis the Eleventh! What say you to the *Oubliettes?* But this is comparatively a mercy. There was a law, it is said, in Scotland (as a Briton, *horresco referens*), under which, by an exquisite refinement, the children of a prisoner, though perfectly innocent, might be tortured before his eyes, in order to make him confess. Even this is better than what I have read as having recently passed in Ceylon; where the minister of the Rajah was obliged, as a punishment, to pound his own son to death in mortar!"

Perceiving Evelyn to shudder, Tremaine continued: " I will relieve you, my friend, from further horrors such as these; but I cannot help closing with, perhaps, the most exquisite piece of injustice that history affords; and that, horrid to say, again in a Christian, nay, in a highly-civilised country, and that country again our own. I mean the story of Kirk, and the maid he dishonoured. Oh! good and gracious God! to suppose that such cold-blooded meanness, vice, and cruelty should be authorised by thee!"

Tremaine's warmth here made him stop; but Evelyn seeing he had not finished, would not begin his reply; and after a minute's silence, Tremaine thus proceeded:—

" I have mentioned the moral evil: if we now come to natural, and look at the vast destruction of things and men, as well as of brute animals, that often prevails, seemingly without any operation of theirs, so vast, so sudden, so violent, so unforeseen, that one might almost think the Deity willed destruction, instead of preservation to his creatures,—what are we to think? The very constitution of the creation, in instances to an immense extent, seems framed for misery."

" You startle me," said Evelyn.

" Yet what can you say to that seemingly universal law, by which animals prey upon one another, sometimes even with cruelty; witness those of the cat kind, and the dreadful boa constrictor!

" Confining ourselves, however, to the human race, behold the young wife, the smiling infant, the joyful husband and father, fulfillers, perhaps, of their duty; sincere worshippers of their God, praying to him, trusting in him, as sinless as human kind can be—! An earthquake arises! a plague! a volcanic eruption! All, all are swept off without mercy; or, perhaps, the survivor left, a husband and a father, heart-stricken, sunk in woe, never to rise again, and allowed to live merely to lament! Wherein does life itself, much less any worldly advantage, appear to be here the concern of the terrible Deity? The virtue of his wife, the innocence and beauty of his infant, which so charmed the mourner's heart, appear to be nothing; the ape of the forest seems to be of not less worth; the worm, the toad, the very dirt he trod on!

" Who then shall say we are of so much consequence to the Almighty, who gave us life for some purpose of his own, but gave it also to monkeys, to worms, and vermin; who allows all to live for a time, and then to perish, be forgotten, and trodden under foot, wholly unconcerned, as it should seem, collectively or individually, at our fate?

" Yet, with all this, the world goes on; all is in time forgotten. New lives succeed; new marriages and children, new men, new beasts, new reptiles, to be mingled together again in the same indiscriminating fate; food for new earthquakes, new plagues, and new eruptions!"

" These are terrible reflections," said Evelyn.

" I own I have made them often," continued Tremaine, " and always with horror at myself. That God has some end in the creation, is to be believed. That there is some system, in which man and brute, bird and insect, have a place, is evident. But not only the purpose is unfathomable, but it seems not to me that the system is ever deranged by all the moral or natural evil that has ever happened. We go on towards the object, whatever it is, now well, now ill, but in the end, always as right as perhaps we were intended to be, and always without farther assistance than was given us at our creation.

" I could multiply illustrations, but these suffice to my

purpose, as to Providence towards man. Then as to instinct, as to brute, or even vegetable matter; aye, or even as to inanimate matter; gravity and all other attraction; all the laws of motion; the tides; the winds and tempests of the sky; the courses of the planets; the sun itself, with the regular returns of the seasons!—however we may be astonished, however awe-struck at the power which could originally give them being, why should we suppose that power perpetually interposing?

"It is said that a sparrow falls not to the ground, without the Almighty! Can this mean more than that, according to the laws which govern the nature of the sparrow, and which were instituted by the Almighty, the bird's fate, whatever it is, overtakes him? If a hard winter, or a storm of hail, or a hawk destroy him, (virtually, indeed, it may be said to be the act of the Deity, because he originally ordained that order of things which produces the destruction, or, if he is saved, the safety,—but) how is this *perpetual* vigilance, this *immediate* act of a governor, exercised on the particular case? So to return to man, and to the very danger we have so recently escaped. I might, to be sure, have been shot, had not the gamekeeper felt himself ruffled at the moment. Is it anything extraordinary, when within a few yards of a mad dog, or a snake, that a man should be ruffled? you, too, might have been bitten had you not closed the gate as you did! Was it anything wonderful, anything superhuman, that you should possess presence of mind. All these things I have resolved over and over again. I cannot discover that I am wrong, or in an error in believing that the obvious and sufficient cause of everything that happens, is the real cause; the Creator primarily, indeed, when he made his laws, but ever afterwards these laws themselves.

"You will observe, I touch not now upon other most weighty, most embarrassing objections, which I never had got over. I count not upon the irreconcilableness of man's free agency with this perpetual interposition; I say nothing now of prescience, and therefore predestination; I confine myself simply here to your own position,

that God is ever upon the watch for us, ever our immediate guide, although he originally gave us guides enough in our reason and our instincts. I will not say that what I have merely argued is a creed in which I will live and die, but it is an argument which, to *my* conception, no one has yet been able to overturn."

Here Tremaine ceased, and what was said in reply will be found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXXI.

PROVIDENCE.—SECOND CAUSES.

God is much displeased that you take with unthankfulness his doing.
SHAKSPEARE.

A PAUSE for some minutes ensued after Tremaine had finished speaking, during which, each friend seemed ruminating on his own ideas. At length the Doctor broke silence:

"You have made," said he, "exactly the argument I expected you *would* make, and I acknowledge you have put it as strongly as I think it can be put. It is that specious, nay, I will allow, that forcible argument drawn from the universality of what is called second causes, and the terrible extent of evil which it would be in vain to deny, which has staggered many well-meaning and sensible men in all ages and countries. You will, however, perceive that the argument is now changed between us. The question is now no longer whether the *laws of our being* do not suffice for our preservation, so much as whether that preservation is even always willed. The mere chance, which, according to you, governs, and the evil which certainly does infest the world, form the reasons of your doubt. Nor is this surprising. Our feelings are often dreadfully shocked, and we tremble to think that errors such as those of which we read, and of which

we are sometimes even witnesses, can be permitted from any cause, by a Being whom we love and thank for his benignity, as well as adore for his power. Then, again, as to the interference and regulation of the events of life, the First Cause, God, is everywhere hid from our sense; the second, that is the immediate cause, is obvious to it. We naturally, therefore, if we look no farther than sense, attribute all to the immediate cause; we think not of what may be, and what is behind. Thus, the Indian who first saw the effect of fire-arms, worshipped the musket, even when discharged, and thrown aside by the hand that used it.

"Again, the child who first sees a show, believes it is the puppets who act. When he sees, or is told of the wires, he discovers the hand of the master.

"As this was the first part of your powerful argument, I shall treat of it first, and leave that drawn from the sufferance of evil for later consideration.

"But here I would premise, that it is vital to the discussion, that the arguers on *our* side of the question should not be misunderstood,—as, I think, we too generally are. For, when we say that nothing is without God, we are answered, as if we had ever contended that he is an *interposing*, special, and, I might almost say miraculous agent in producing every specific thought, word, and deed, in the commonest employment of the wills and faculties of his creatures; that is in morals, that a man cannot walk, change his place, or perform the general duties or actions of life without an interposing divine Spirit, specially calling him to it. Thus, I remember a visionary female, who scarcely moved from one room to another, or sat down to table, or lay down to rest, but she said she was *called* to it. This would too evidently do away with the common faculties by which we carry on our existence, to say nothing of that free-will which was one of the designs of our creation, and the instrument, indeed, by which we act. To say that God *interferes* to incline me to pluck this flower, and to smell to it as I do,—having originally a sense of smelling, and a desire to exercise

it,—is what scarcely even a visionary can hold; certainly not we.

" To go farther, and say that when a man mounts his horse, knowing how to ride, and the horse accustomed to the saddle, he is preserved from being thrown by the special act of the Almighty, and not by the faculty of preserving his balance, or governing the reins; or that that boat which we see gliding along, and which is kept afloat by the known laws of physics, would sink, *notwithstanding* those laws, unless specially and *over and above* sustained by the same power;—all this is nowhere pretended.

" Again, to advance farther still, that a man pursues his instincts, and all the innocent propensities of his nature, his social passions, by which he cultivates friendship, feels love, desires to marry, becomes a parent, and loves his progeny, or pursues a fair ambition, endeavours to improve his being, studies the arts, practises commerce, or betakes himself to learning;—that he can only be *impelled* to this, or, in short, to the common occurrences of life by which man is man, under the *special* guidance of a special providing power that leads him in his progress, in the same manner as it operates upon matter in gravity, or as we lead a child who is learning to walk or to read,—this also is nowhere pretended. The general design and propensities of our being, suffice, no doubt, for this, as for ten thousand other things within the scope of the human character.

" *Not that even here God is not always present, or might not interfere if he pleased;* but, having designed us to be what we are, in respect to all this, it would be as vain as useless to *speculate* whether we act from perpetually *new* impulses, or only through original energies."

" In this I entirely agree," said Tremaine; " but I think you admit largely, for one who is to prove the interference of the Deity anywhere. With so much excluded, what is to be included? and with so much left to ourselves, who is to say where government begins?"

" That certainly is *the* question," answered Evelyn; " and great and profound as I allow it to be, I had almost said it is unanswerable. Unanswerable, however, only in speculation and in theory; for as to all good ends of practice, as to hope, trust, reliance, and resignation, I think it is abundantly clear where it is that we are under divine government, although we may not know exactly where we are not."

" I shall be glad to see how you will make this out," said Tremaine, " and to learn exactly which is the province of man, which of heaven."

" To tell this exactly," answered Evelyn, " is beyond man's limited capacity; but thus much I think we may say is clear,—that the province of a *moral* Providence is *morals;* and by morals, I mean a state of *responsibility.* Evidently, I also mean, all that produces the actions, as well as the fortunes of men; that which we call their conduct in their three great relations to God, to themselves, and their fellow-men. It is here that their reason is chiefly employed, and that the will is called upon for determination. Here, therefore, *responsibility* begins, and with it the moral events, if I may so call them, of life. Here emphatically, therefore, as an obvious consequence, from being left to ourselves, we stand in need of that direction and assistance, which, according to us, are afforded by him of whose *power* to afford them there is, at least, no doubt.

" You will observe, I speak of *responsibility,* and the events of life, as forming the peculiar field of our discussion; because here, if not here alone, is the field for interposition.

" I beseech you to mark this distinction, because without it, our question may be perpetually, and surely unnecessarily, embarrassed."

" I agree to this," said Tremaine, " and perceive that to do so will bring the real point better to our view. That point is to show that the immediate causes of things and actions, are not the real causes; but that there is another and unseen cause that moves us as we are moved; as a master, according to your illustration, by the help of wires moves a puppet."

"I think a better illustration," observed Evelyn, "may be drawn from the composition of an army."

"This will be new," said Tremaine.

"We see it," continued Evelyn, "divided into a variety of ranks, from the commander-in-chief to the lowest soldier; into divisions of various sizes and characters; that is, from what are technically called divisions to brigades, regiments, battalions, companies, squads, and files. The private in the field, or on the parade, receives orders, and seems *immediately* to obey his serjeant: he is certainly immediately put in motion by him. Could he be right in thinking that he is so, because he is the immediate, or, according to our subject, the *second* cause?"

"Indubitably not," said Tremaine; "but he, at least, can see and hear his captain, perhaps even his field-officer."

"He may or he may not," observed Evelyn; "but granting that he does, does he know who put the field-officer himself in motion, or could he guess that it was the commander-in-chief in the field, he may not even then be right, since he may have to go to a still higher commander, a hundred miles off, who may himself be moved by orders from others at home.

"This being admitted, I think we may come to a conclusion not very unfounded."

"What is it?"

"That our private soldier would not be very correct in imagining that the first cause of his movements in the ranks was his serjeant."

"I cannot quarrel with this illustration," said Tremaine.

"I do not mean to say," continued Evelyn, "that we are either puppets or private soldiers; or that all we do is done for us, exactly in the way in which it *is* done. But whatever our liberty, (by which I mean our freedom of will), I do mean to say, that wherever the freedom of man produces moral action, there *is* a master, a commander behind, who suffers or controls events, conducts the great business of the scene, and yet, by the wonderfulness of the apparatus, leaves the actors free.

"If the possibility, nay, even the probability of this cannot be conceived, or being conceived, not allowed, all argument must be at an end. For everything not miraculous (and miracles are over), has its secondary or immediate, over and above the first one. It is, indeed, the actual mode in which the first cause thinks fit to govern the world. This immediate cause too must be allowed to be apparently sufficient, in both physics and morals, to produce the effect which *is* produced, otherwise it could be no cause; and hence an addition to the difficulty; for I allow it requires some refinement in reasoning, some research, comparison of things, and moral inference, to arrive at our conclusion; but not the less is the conclusion true.

"You admit, at least, thus much: that from the very power of the Deity, he *might* prevent everything that *does* happen. His *consent* therefore is, at any rate, necessary for all that we see; which is a great advance towards the next step, that if he consents he wills, and if he wills, he leaves it not to chance or ourselves to carry his will into effect. This ought to be for ever in our minds, ever before us; and it is the want of this, that makes us so content to go no farther than the *immediate* cause. Hence the impiety of your infidel king; hence free-thinking, which seems to me to be little more than *want* of thinking. I, at least, subscribe to the apophthegm of Bacon:—'A little philosophy inclineth a man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion.' For while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them, and go no farther; but when it beholdeth the chain of them, confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity."

"But as you allow the power that made the world, and imposed the laws which you say suffice for its continuance, both in physics and morals, you must at least also allow that it cannot be extinguished."

"I do," said Tremaine.

"It must then continue somewhere, for you only tell me it is *withdrawn* from its superintendence of us, as no

longer necessary. Are you then able to say, whither, and to what work it withdraws? Is the Divinity, according to you, buried in the perpetual occupation of building new worlds, and inventing new natures, so as to forget those he has already made; casting these also aside as nothing worth, as soon as he has finished them, to go to still newer creations?—Is this your opinion? or having allowed the ubiquity and omniscience of the Godhead, *can* you reconcile the contradiction?"

Tremaine allowed he could not.

"Is it not then more consonant to reason (can it indeed be otherwise, from the Divine Nature), to suppose him for ever dwelling in all his works; and if dwelling, surely not for nothing, surely not as if he cared *not* for them?"

Tremaine allowed the force of the argument was considerable, and the questions new.

"Perhaps you will say," continued Evelyn, "that to suffer things to be done, is not to will them, and though God may not interfere to prevent, as he cannot but know them, he may note them for some future purpose, when the ends of the creation are answered!"

"Is not that possible?" said Tremaine, "and does not the existence of so much crime, apparently unpunished, make it probable?"

"Be it so," returned Evelyn; "but the consequence still is Providence only deferred, and deferred for a future state of rewards and punishments, which is more than I here ask of you, or than you I fancy will admit."

Tremaine was struck, and again allowed that the questions were new.

"I assure you," said Evelyn, "they are questions which I never knew answered, and do not think open to an answer. To my mind they go to the bottom of the whole subject, and prevail over all the most specious difficulties."

"I feel that they are of the very greatest weight," said Tremaine.

"My argument, then, exclusive of general belief, is emphatically founded upon the undenied and undeniable

power of the Godhead; its necessary, unvaried, and invariable watchfulness, over the machine; and the impossibility that anything can be done without its both knowing and suffering it to be done. This alone, as the lawyers say, would be my case, and I might here throw the onus upon you to disprove it. But I will not leave it here. The care God has bestowed upon our mundane system is obvious. Can we doubt then his *anxiety*, if I may so speak, that all shall be properly fitted for the parts that are performing?"

"Perhaps not," said Tremaine.

"Then what should we think," continued Evelyn, "of a man who should build a costly theatre, composed of most complicated scenery, contrived with all forethought, decorated with all splendour, prepared for thousands of spectators, the world ransacked for actors, *himself perpetually present, perpetually inspecting, not even able to be otherwise;* yet without anxiety whether any part of this mighty preparation fail; or at best, satisfied with the confidence that though all get into disorder, it will just stop short of final ruin. Thus, though he see his actors falter, their parts mangled, misunderstood, or forgotten, the action disturbed, nay often on the eve of being stopped altogether; though the theatre itself be even sometimes endangered, and though, as I have said, he be present everywhere, everywhere on the watch, and a breath, a wish, would restore the order of things—he leaves it to itself, as if he had neither object, nor interest in what he has created, nay, although under his immediate eye, as if he was ignorant of its very existence."

"No doubt," said Tremaine, "the conduct of such a man would be that of an insane person."

"Yet such," answered Evelyn, "is the conduct of the Deity, in the opinion of the doubter of his providence. Ingenious, and indeed forcible as you have been, you have not met me in these most essential points. You have not denied the *power* of the Deity, if he please to assert it. You have not denied that God is and must be ever present, ever informed of our minutest actions, our remotest thoughts, our most transient feelings. If so,

you confer upon him immediately the character of a watchful *moral agent;* nor can you deny that he must *remember*. You give him, therefore, power, knowledge, vigilance, inspection, and *remembrance*. You also admit our importance with him, from the simple fact of his having placed us here; our place too is at the head of the world, which he has taken so much *pains*, if I may use such language, to protect, refresh, support, and enlighten, by an apparatus and by laws so stupendously wonderful, that our minds are dazzled to blindness by their contemplation. All this you admit; and all for what?—that he may abandon us, throw us aside, leave us to chance, or worse than chance, to our own most weak, most imperfect, and most dangerous government!

"Again, I ask, is this, can this be the conduct of the moral agent we have proved him, or rather of a father to the children of his hands? You admit he sees, and therefore watches; but to what purpose watch, if we can suffice to ourselves? You admit he knows: but to what purpose know, if either we are sufficiently right, or he indifferent whether we are right or wrong? Most of all, you admit, he remembers; but for what purpose remember, if nothing is to be done upon it; nothing rewarded; nothing punished hereafter? Thus always present, always inspecting, always informed, always reminiscent, it is of no use, and for no purpose, that he is present, vigilant, informed or reminiscent. Either, therefore, we cannot go wrong, and there is no such thing as crime against God or man; or if there be, he is indifferent to its commission, because men can get right again without his assistance; or (which is of more consequence than all we are discussing), there must be an hereafter, a reckoning, and a judgment."

Tremaine was deeply struck, and Evelyn allowed him to ponder upon this, expecting a reply.

Receiving none, he went on: "But what if I question your whole position, because contradicted by the whole history of mankind?"

"I wait your meaning," said Tremaine.

"It is this," replied Evelyn: "I acknowledge that we

cannot make out the design of the creation, the purposes for which we are here, the reasons why we are no more nor no less than what we are. But see the difference of our persuasions! When I look around me, and contemplate the whole wonderful, yet inscrutable system of nature which strikes me on every side throughout her extraordinary processes; when I view my fellow-beings, inhabitants of the world like myself, from the worm upwards—from the insect of an hour to the eagle of an hundred years; when I think of the monsters of the deep, or the monarch of the desert, or turn perchance to what savours of sport and play, and even (if we dare say so of any work of nature) which exhibits almost the ridiculous, as in the talk of a parrot, or the mowing of a monkey; but above all, when I look into myself, with all my hopes, and fears, and struggles, an enigmatical mixture of energy and weakness, reason and folly, of aspirations after virtue, and apostacy to vice; when I see all this, I own the ever-during question—*why* it all exists?—is never absent from my mind. That *some* purpose is to be answered by all these wonders, these endless varieties, this astonishing machinery, is to my conviction clear, though it is the only thing that is so. You, on the other hand, are content with it as a saddening fact, that all is created *merely* to be destroyed; that life seems given *merely* to be followed by death; and that all is but one uniform succession of corruption and renovation. Thus, with you, the excellent warm motion becomes really a kneaded clod, to make way for some other clod, to be informed by a like kindling spirit: and so the process goes on in one eternal round, for nothing, for no purpose, either of trial here, or reward hereafter. And yet you acknowledge that all is, if not guided by, at least perfected and minutely known to, some all-powerful, all-knowing, all-operating, yet invisible, intangible, and, to every sense, unperceivable Being.

"To me, this I own is marvellous—me, whom it kindles, excites, absorbs, yet stupifies, while, without success, I endeavour to unravel it. Believe me, it is fearful, most fearful; astonishing, most astonishing!

"But though I shrink in my own littleness from the subject, and abandon all hope of ever understanding it, one thing to me is clear—that *your* impression upon it (excuse me) is what all feeling, all reasoning, and all nature, through all her works, proclaim aloud to be false!

"As to the history of mankind, I deny your whole position upon it, because contradicted by the fact! You say all has got right again by the exertions of the same man; that is, as you mean it, *as distinct from God.* Yet you forget that religion always accompanied this same man, in all his returns from disorder to order; and religion always implies belief in the protection of Heaven. Unless, therefore, you show me that religion was banished the world, when it got right after nearly perishing, and that morality alone restored its security and happiness, your assertion fails. Observe, I speak not here of true religion; of religion even not exceedingly corrupted with false and imaginary gods; but still a religion inculcating the power and protection, as well as the vengeance of those gods, whatever their names, forms, or attributes. The same forcible consideration destroys your confidence in what you call the laws of nature, even where there has been no disorder; for you tell me that those laws, added to those of reason, are enough to keep us on the whole pretty right as to morals. If so, what becomes of your argument from such dreadful moral evil? You say that, true, there have been great shocks in the world, great crimes and desolations, and nations as well as men have acted like demons; but all has got right again by the exertions of the same individual man that brought all so near to ruin. I ask, where have you ever found these laws, without being accompanied by the strong enforcement of religion? But even if you have, and it were possible to suppose men without a worship, without fear of God, without hope or presentiment of a life to come, I then ask where is responsibility, and if no responsibility, where are morals?"

"Surely," said Tremaine, "the answer is easy, as long as there is a law of nature, with all its enforcements."

"My dear friend," rejoined Evelyn, "be not led away with philosophical fiction, or rather philosophical jargon. Tell me whence is this law of nature, where these enforcements?"

"In the heart," returned Tremaine.

"Good! and of course, then, every heart is the same, and equally led to practise virtue and shun vice, without the hope of heaven or fear of hell!"

"That I should not say," observed Tremaine.

"Yet that you must say, if you hold that, when corrupted, we recover without religion."

"May there not be religion without futurity?"

"Yes! but a sorry one, for there is then no responsibility,—which is the question.

"Come, my friend," continued the Doctor, "you have not considered this matter to its centre. What is the meaning of this law of nature of yours? Does not a law imply an agent that both enacts and enforces it? If not, what can be more nugatory? We may again return to our illustration of King Log."

"And yet, may we not be responsible without any king?"

"I beseech you to whom? Who enforces? Who punishes? Who induces? In what is the punishment? In what the inducement? You will tell me, virtue! What is that? The fitness of things; rectitude. More intelligibly, regard for the happiness of the world at large. You mean, then, by virtue, the general *interest* of mankind. But what if the individuals are not so studious of the interests of others as to prefer, or even not neglect it, when it seems to interfere with their own? and, if they do prefer their own, what, according to you, is to hinder them? Will these laws of yours do it, of which every one is the interpreter for himself? These laws, without an enforcer, an avenger, a judge? A milder sceptic, such as you, may tell me, it is the will of God; and I agree you can, from analogy, make out a cogent demonstration of this. But as to will,—of what sort can that be, which may be denied, thwarted, and resisted at every moment with impunity? Your will, therefore,

has no obligation; your fine laws, no binding principle; and your God is the God of Epicurus, who cares not for you, would be degraded by doing anything to serve you, and allows you to obey or disobey this will, exactly at pleasure. When the world, therefore, has been wrong, it must get right by some other means than human, or than the exertions of man left to himself! And this is true in fact; for you never yet knew man left to himself —that is, without religion.

"You, indeed, have admitted *some* religion, when you say that from admiration, and a sense of power, you are ready to adore. But why adore what does neither good nor harm? a Being, which, though it may have originally laid the foundation of the plagues, and commotions, and consequent miseries you have described; or of the magnificent wonders in physics, which you have also mentioned; has taken leave of them for ever, nor ever condescends to interfere in their direction, for good, or for evil? Your adoration, then, is as if it were of a *mere great wonder;* a curiosity of the greatest, the most astonishing magnitude indeed, but still a mere curiosity. Surely we adore, that is *worship,* for other causes!

"But, perhaps, like some other deists, you are willing to thank the Deity for whatever happiness is allowed you below?"

Tremaine nodded assent.

"Then you imply an agent to be thanked. Some Being, who not only has been active for us, but is present to us to receive our thanks, and not only this, but who will continue by us, able still farther to help us. We may venerate the memory of a dead benefactor, we only *thank* a living and an active one.

"Thus every way you can point, if *short of atheism,* you point to religion; and wherever there is man, there also is an admission of Providence."

Tremaine, observing Evelyn to pause, and look around; with much interest, entreated him to proceed.

"I am thinking," continued he, "I can bring it still more home. You see those heifers in the meadows below. They have cropped their green food, and have

drunk of the stream. Some of them still remain to cool in it; some have sought the shade, and are lying down to ruminate; some are sedate and quiet with happiness; some sport and play; all are innocent. There is no right or wrong with them; or, rather, all is right, because it cannot be wrong. For God's sake, why is this with a poor brute, 'a beast that wants discourse of reason,' and not with man, a much more noble animal, if I am right; a much meaner one, if you are not wrong?"

"I see not your exact application," said Tremaine.

"And yet it is not very far-fetched," returned Evelyn. "I say these cattle, and all others that live, all beasts even of prey, nay, all reptiles and vermin, that act in their natures, following the laws of their instincts, all given by the same God,—these brutes, these creatures, dumb and mechanical as they are, are happier and more fortunate than we; that is, God has been kinder to them, unless that same God *assists* by his Providence the weak wills and reason he has given to *us*, the supposed nobler creature of the two."

"Why the will and reason are so weak as to require this aid, is my question," said Tremaine.

"'Tis a question," answered his friend, "with which you have no business. The fact is undoubted, and that once established, we must deal with it as best we can. Possibly, nay probably, it is the mode in which the Supreme has chosen that the creature called man shall be conducted in his being, while the brute is left without responsibility, and, therefore, without difficulty."

"I remember," said Tremaine, "a strong passage in your Wollaston, to this effect, of the supposed superior lot of the brutes,—which almost staggered me."

"And why not *your* Wollaston too," returned Evelyn, "if it staggered you? I remember it also. He says, that unless there is a future state, which implies the most extended of all schemes of Providence, the pleasures of brutes, though but sensual, are more *complete:* 'they go wholly into them,' says he: 'their sufferings are not heightened by reflection; they are not perplexed with cares of families and posterity, are not anxious about

a future state, have no disappointments; and at last some sudden and unforeseen blow finishes them, before they even knew they were mortal*.'

"You can scarcely choose but admit the soundness of this opinion, unless, as I said, the Almighty condescends, nay, *unless it is an original part of his plan*, to assist by his Providence our most insufficient reason—the only equivalent we have for the instinct which so suffices for brutes."

Tremaine seemed moved, but asked if his friend really thought reason insufficient for our government?

"Your favourite Horace, who was anything but out of humour with mankind, shall reply to you," said Evelyn:

> "Audax omnia perpeti,
> Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas.

"No! my friend; with God, we are much—without God, we are nothing—nay, worse than nothing. And it is the same thing as to be without his assistance, if he has left us to ourselves, and is indifferent to crime. Now let me ask, whether that can be your real opinion?"

Tremaine hesitated, but at length avowed that crime could not be indifferent to the Creator.

"Our subject then is at an end," rejoined Evelyn; "for either you admit that God does interfere to prevent or punish crime (which he by no means always does in this world); or you give me all I want, or desire, in owning a future judgment in a world to come."

Tremaine was rather startled at the consequences of his admission, and begged to retrace his steps.

"I own," said he, "I saw not to what my answer would lead, and I feel embarrassed; yet I shudder to think that crime is a matter of indifference to man, much more to the Almighty."

"See to what scepticism leads," said Evelyn, with mildness; "but I have often told you, you are not really a sceptic."

* Religion of Nature, p. 211.

"May not, however," resumed Tremaine, "the argument I have used be sound as against a Providence in this world, if there *is* the state you talk of in a world to come?"

"It is your only alternative," observed Evelyn; "for then certainly the notion, not of indifference here on the part of the Creator, (for that nothing can prove), but of a sort of suffering of vice for a season, might be at least not irrational. Grant me this, and you bless me indeed."

"I am not prepared," replied Tremaine, with hesitation; "alas! by no means prepared. Yet I feel distressed; for, with perhaps only a half-convinced reason, I yet perceive that, to be merely consistent, if there is neither Providence here, nor retribution hereafter, there can be no distinction between virtue and vice, and all must be left to disposition, to chance, to indulgence, to prudence, or imprudence. No! this can never be!...."

"Hobbes will help you out," said Evelyn, "for he holds that very doctrine, and is quite content to reduce all to the enactions of the civil magistrate*. Spinoza, too, another brilliant guide, defines natural right to be natural power; so that, acquire the power, and a man, from the law of nature, may do what he pleases. Are you content with this master of reasoning, who be sure teaches us also to deny a Providence?"

"I have owned," observed Tremaine, "this cannot be; but I own too, I once favoured, or at least took no pains to confute Hobbes, and that I have been embarrassed—yes! I confess it—with Spinoza!"

"And Carneades, and Pyrrho," resumed Evelyn, "before him, and Hume and Bolingbroke, who have done so much since to mend the matter."

"My dear friend," said Tremaine, after some reflection, "I own the speciousness, nay, I may say what I thought the irresistible force, of the argument from second causes, misled me so far as to refuse myself to what you called your *primâ facie* demonstration of a particular Providence. Whether we live again I wish I could say;

* See two excellent old Sermons by Dr. Rogers, in confutation of this folly; "Rogers' Sermons on the necessity of Revelation."

but if we do not, I agree, could other stupendous difficulties be got over, that as God has the power, so he appears to have the will to protect and guide us—and if we do live again, all may in the end be set right. It would, therefore, I own, be most rational to suppose, that he who made us, and is, because he always *must* be, with us, cannot be there for nothing, cannot be indifferent. But the horrible evils in morals, and the overwhelming quantity of natural evil in the world, only a small part of which I have touched upon, and which you have not yet noticed, meet me wherever I go, set all my alarms loose, and chain up all my belief."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

PROVIDENCE.—THE ARGUMENT FROM EVIL.

As if we were villians by necessity, fools by heavenly compulsion—and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on.

SHAKSPEARE.

"If I have not yet touched upon this part of your objection," replied Evelyn, "it is only, as you will have perceived, to keep objections that belong to different classes properly separate. But I think I can give you the same satisfaction (if I have given you satisfaction) upon both.

"And yet moral evil, I allow, is a frightful spectre. I shut not my eyes either to its extent or its enormity, and if I could pardon scepticism anywhere, it would be when prompted by the dreadful crimes which the history of our species seems almost everywhere to exhibit. At the same time the greatest care must be taken, that in computing evil, as against good—that is, in estimating the intentions

of benevolence, or the contrary, in the creation—we do not exaggerate the fact as to the evil, so as to obscure the real truth. Upon this none of us bestow sufficient, or, I may say, any pains. This I am sure of, that your supposition that the history of man is the history of a wild beast, is a great error. The great and prominent points of general history must necessarily consist, in a great measure, of a mixture of crime with virtue, if not of crime itself. For history records few, but great events; these can only emanate from struggle and difficulty; and struggle and difficulty can scarcely be the consequence of peace and good-will. The very virtues recorded can only be shown in a contest with and in contrast to vice."

"This is true," said Tremaine.

"How many thousands, and tens of thousands," continued Evelyn, "nay, how many millions of comparatively innocent persons are suffered to pass along the current of history unrecorded, for one great tyrant, or hero, or rebel! How many peaceful citizens die in their beds, for one execution, or one murder!

> "Along the cool sequestered vale of life,
> They keep the noiseless tenor of their way.

"Yet we do not observe this. Even in private life, one act of oppression, or very great wickedness, shall be the talk of a whole country, while peace and order, and sometimes, very great, but unobtrusive merit, glide imperceptibly down the stream."

"This also is true," said Tremaine.

"I do not mean to say," continued Evelyn, "that this is wrong, or not to be accounted for according to the common course of things. But, in estimating the human character, in philosophising, as it were, upon the real good or evil of human life, we cannot, in common fairness, leave the immense, though unobvious, quantity of private happiness out of the account."

"To all this, no one can refuse to agree," said Tremaine.

"Yet, from the want of considering this, you have perhaps suffered yourself to estimate the quantity of evil

in the world, at far more than it deserves. I have often done so myself; and striking as your picture is, yet I think I could even heighten it. It is certain I have almost been disposed to ask myself, I will not say with doubt, or irreverence, but with very assailing fear, why such crimes as those which accompanied the French Revolution were permitted? Why the dove-like piety of Elizabeth was destined to a scaffold, when Mirabeau died in his bed? Long before this, I have never been able to read of the scoundrel selfishness of our Henry VIII., that detestable savage, who spared neither man in his hate, nor woman in his lust; that legal murderer, and legitimate adulterer—that hypocrite, to whom even Kirk was an angel;—without feeling my blood boil over with indignation, that such a creature could be human, much more be trusted with power. But even this has yielded to the sympathy and anguish, I might almost say, the agony of mind with which one views the unmerited suffering of the meek, humble, and pious Jane Grey. As far from intending crime as an angel of light; in herself pure as accomplished, beautiful as young, and unpretending as beautiful, her hard, hard fortune must interest a savage: and one passes in haste over the page of her merciless execution, lest the heart grow too sick with pity.

"A different, but scarcely less horror, is inspired by the cruelties that so long attended religious persecution. I pass the Christiani ad Leones, so complained of by Tertullian; for the Christian persecutions may have been permitted for ultimate good. But that, for so many hundred years, the most enlightened and best educated of their time, the scholars of the world, and ministers of God, should condemn one another to the flames for differences of opinion, and think (if they could think) they were doing God service; that this most cruel of all deaths should be inflicted for the most venial of all crimes (if they were indeed crimes), has made, and still makes me shudder but to think of them. That they should have been perpetrated in this country, even as late as the first James, and that the writ *de hæretico*

comburendo disgraced our statute book till the time of Charles II., by no means gives me consolation."

"I am eager on my part," returned Tremaine, "to know how you will reconcile these things as the work of a Being, who you say guides everything as a father his children, and who wills and wishes those children to be happy?"

"There is a lurking fallacy in this observation," replied Evelyn, "for I have nowhere said this is God's work. God forbid! That it should be *allowed* to be the work of man is fearful enough. The unravelling this scheme of Divine Government is, in fact, one of the deepest points of theological science, and nothing but a thorough and most enlarged contemplation of the general attributes of the Deity can come near to expound it.

"That God is wise, just, and benevolent, is not denied between us; that he wills the happiness of his creatures, is proclaimed by the beauty and gladness of nature, and by the fact that, with all the admitted evil we have discussed, good so greatly preponderates, that happiness, or a reasonable share of it, is in the power of all, if we do not abuse it. That all, or nearly all, moral evil springs from the vice of man, not the intention or contrivance of the Deity, you will not yourself deny."

"I do not," said Tremaine; "but the vice and the vritue spring equally from the Power that created both."

"Indubitably," answered Evelyn; "but at least the question then becomes immediately changed, and is in fact not why the Almighty made us to be unhappy, but why he permits us to be vicious? In other words, not why he has *destined* us to be miserable (for that he has not), but why he suffers us to make ourselves so? Now this you will see is the same as asking why he has thought fit to make an imperfect creature: which, when you tell me why he has made the worm that crawls in our walk, or even that glorious sky over our heads, I will answer."

"No man can tell this," said Tremaine.

"I agree," replied Evelyn; "and you see there are

mysteries in all these questions, into which we cannot penetrate, beyond which we cannot go, and at which, therefore, I think we are bound voluntarily to stop. If this, then, be one of those questions (as it seems to be), we stop at the fact, that we are made most imperfect creatures, capable of virtue, but also capable of vice; a scheme of creation, the reason for which we cannot even conjecture, but which at once places us in a state of responsibility."

"I see not the last," said Tremaine.

"It is the only means," rejoined Evelyn, "by which the evil of this imperfection can be cured, or perhaps even rendered tolerable. The proof is, that wherever this responsibility is most admitted, evil is least, and happiness most to be found. Throughout that black catalogue of horrors which we have read to each other, we shall, on investigation, find that in proportion to the quantum of evil responsibility has been thrown off. If you ask why this breach of responsibility is suffered, I again refer you to the very scheme of our creation,—imperfection, and again reply, I cannot tell; but the very circumstance that there remains behind something belonging to the subject, something in the Divine Mind as to this world, which we cannot penetrate, and which you at least cannot deny may be known to other beings, if not to ourselves hereafter,—this very circumstance shows that it may be no *contradiction*, to the notion of God's Providence and justice."

"I should be satisfied with this exposition," said Tremaine, "and come willingly to your creed, if it went the whole length of this overbearing difficulty. But it is evident it goes no farther than to account for the evils sustained by vicious men. Were these the only sufferers of the world, gladly would I subscribe to a doctrine which would then be clear enough. Vice being permitted, and vice the sole cause of misfortune, the world has little reason to complain, if the wicked are unhappy. But, alas! by far the greater miseries are suffered by the apparently innocent, while, as I said before, vice is too often triumphant. In the examples we have each of us

supplied, this has invariably been the fact. Now, if your doctrine were true, not only vice would not triumph, but would always be punished even in this world."

"Various answers," said Evelyn, "to this, I own, embarrassing objection, have exercised men of the most powerful understandings, with various success. The oldest, namely, that of the Fathers, seems to me to be the best."

"You mean," said Tremaine, "that of Origen, Lactantius, and others, that it could not be otherwise, consistently with the free-will of man."

"I do," rejoined Evelyn. "For where there is this free-will, from the very force of the term, it must be competent to will evil, as well as good; and if the scheme, as I have called it, of our creation, is imperfection, it must follow, that the evil which is possible, will actually be. I need not pursue the induction, to show that this at least accounts for the sufferings of the virtuous, inflicted by the vicious. Then, as to the escape of the vicious from punishment in this world, the answer (independent of a future state, which furnishes the most complete one), is, that the fact as a general proposition is mistaken. That there are too many examples of unpunished villany, is true; but there is no proportion between them and those of the general happiness of integrity and virtue. *It is not laid down as a scheme* of the Providence we treat of, that vice should be protected, virtue oppressed. Instances of it happen; but that is not the *scheme*.

"Another answer is drawn from the government by second causes, which we have lately discussed, and the free-will we have just touched upon. Did God always appear in person, as it were, whether through prophets or miracles, as among the early Jews, or only through second causes, but *immediately on the commitment of crime*, not only would free-will be controlled by a force which would leave it free no longer, but, as has been well said by old Sherlock, there would be no end to the executions palpably going on before our faces.

"I do not say," continued Evelyn, seeing Tremaine

prepared to object, "that this last might not be a more secure, and therefore more happy state; for, God knows, I am not so confident as not to feel my responsibility, in the latitude allowed me, most perilous; but, at any rate, it is not the state in which it has pleased God to place me. He reveals himself no longer by visible and immediate interposition, and it is most certain he allows vice, in some instances, to prosper for a time. Nevertheless, I doubt if these instances are ever perfect, to the effect you suppose them. They will not, perhaps, any of them, bear the test of inquiry, had we the means of making it; and they are by no means so frequent as, for the argument, they have been imagined."

"Yet you will not deny," observed Tremaine, "the number of brilliant or successful villains that shock us in history—Augustus, Dionysius, Louis XI., or Cromwell, among a thousand others."

"I should, perhaps, puzzle you," replied Evelyn, "if I were to put you upon the proof of your thousand; nay, were I to ask you to name me one *happy* villain. Even where all seems fair on the outside, do we really know the whole of the case? Do we see into the secret heart of the actors? Do we hear their inward groans, the writhings, or the drownings of their consciences, their fears, their perpetual suspicions, worse than a thousand deaths? Sure I am, the instances you *have* adduced will not hold. Augustus, in his fortune, was always successful; perhaps, in the opinion of the world, always happy. Does his family history support this? Augustus, however, though he achieved despotism at the expense of many lives, some of them of good, or what are called good men, was not one of those worst of wicked persons on whom your argument should rely. He found the world in arms, and his country rent to pieces; he, indeed, joined in proscriptions, and suffered Cicero to be murdered; but he began not the struggle; some part he was forced to take, and amidst the universal disorder, he rode out the storm. He was, perhaps, the least wicked of his party, and might be designed by the very Providence which from his story you question, to give

the comparative peace to the empire which it afterwards enjoyed."

"Yet that Brutus and Cassius," exclaimed Tremaine, "the champions of liberty, should be destroyed by such profligates as himself and Antony, merely that he afterwards should trample upon that liberty!"

"I cannot follow you in this," said Evelyn, "and would not if I could! How know we that the liberty you advocate would have been restored by the success of your champions? how, even, that it would at that time have been best for an empire so universally corrupted? No: we must be better informed before we presume to plunge into such a question, and if better informed, I am convinced we should be satisfied.

"As to your other examples, Dionysius is the last I should have chosen to prove triumph. Though his murders and sacrileges had been an hundred-fold greater than they were, and still he had been allowed to retain the power they had obtained for him, the sword of Damocles, the fear of trusting life to his own daughters, and even the construction of his *ear* alone, would prove that he was already, and in this world, plunged into retributive torments. I should say the same of your Louis XI., if only from the devilish defences of Plessis les Tours; and as for Cromwell, your most specious instance, until you show me the seclusion of his bed-chamber, the breathings of his sleep, and the known alarms which produced his last sickness and death, I cannot trust his authority."

"But supposing this to destroy the argument as to the wicked," said Tremaine, "unhappily, it explains not equally well the infliction of such miseries as are suffered by the good."

"Here, still," replied Evelyn, "we are in the dark; for who are good, is a fearful question; and even with those really so, we know not what trials may be necessary for them in the Divine intention, in order to fit them for higher rewards, any more than what mundane consequences may follow of ultimate benefit, from the very horror inspired by their fate. It is this alone can soften

or console me for the lot of that sainted Princess of France whom I have mentioned. But I dare not meddle with it. I content myself with telling you, as I have told myself, that in all these awful speculations we are not true judges; we are even presumptuous pretenders, finites as we are, to judge of infinite. Confined as we are to this little circle, this close and bounded horizon, this speck of vision, I need not tell you, that he who sees the whole, sees more than we, and can alone be judge. In short, I need not say that God's justice is not our justice, and it is not only folly, but scarcely less than impious, to require to understand the wisdom of the All-wise, or measure his knowledge by our ignorance."

Seeing Tremaine moved, Evelyn went on: "So clear is this, that I would recommend you to the well-known tale of Parnell, as a sufficient solution, on this part of your objection, of all your doubts. It is a fiction, indeed, but easily reducible to fact. You see there, why an apparently generous man may be robbed, and a miser enriched; why a favourite and innocent child may be cut off from a naturally virtuous father, and a man, in the very act of an hospitable office, murdered by an ungrateful villain, yet all be right when understood. All this is so cogent, as well as so ingenious, so convincing, as well as so beautifully told, that I could envy the author of this now common-place, but still very delightful piece."

Tremaine felt much convinced; but said he would be better satisfied with a critique upon real cases.

"All imaginary illustrations," said Evelyn, "if they are sound, may be made real. Once but ponder the sentiment, that evil is almost always the concomitant of greater good, and objections founded on the injustice of God will melt away. You have talked of plagues and earthquakes. They are frightful things; but could the processes which make the world what it is, for the habitation of man, proceed without them? And if they cannot, can their own necessary consequences be avoided? In some instances, man is himself the cause of his own liability to their mischiefs, by fixing himself so completely

in the midst of them. The world is surely large enough. The same may be said of venomous creatures and the beasts of the desert. They have a right to their world as well as we.

"But you would have me criticise real cases. I have told you I dare not; simply because I do not, cannot know their reality. All that I do know is, how mistaken we ourselves are in our maxims of judging. Cicero makes Providence questioned, because the good and bold Scipios were beaten in Spain, and Hannibal had killed Marcellus; nay, even because F. Maximus buried his son, after he had been consul. As if, because the Scipios had been conquerors, they had necessarily been good, and might not in their turn be conquered; as if a consul might not die in the lifetime of his father; or, as Wollaston well asks, as if Hannibal was not as good a man as Marcellus."

"You have not yet noticed the case of Kirk," said Tremaine.

"My friend," replied Evelyn, "I have felt that case, and a thousand others nearer our own times, as pinchingly as perhaps you would have me. But am I prepared for the facts even there? That Kirk deserves execration—that the hanging he inflicted on another would have been too good for himself—I feel as well as you; that he has long incurred the Divine vengeance, I believe; and even here on earth, for the reasons I gave, I know not that he escaped. But as to the objects of his cruelty, were they even themselves faultless? One was, at least, a rebel, and his life not unjustly, perhaps, forfeited; for there was not a pretence for Monmouth's invasion. The other, so tender, possibly so pardonable, certainly so abused—was she, in the conduct which provokes our pity, altogether innocent? It is this pity for her, and anger at Kirk, that tell us not to scrutinise too severely, how little she was qualified to imitate the imploring, the tender, but high-minded Isabel*!"

* Of course he refers to Shakspeare's Isabel.

"You keep me at arm's length, I allow," said Tremaine, "even on this shocking case. I will now, however, come nearer home, (alas, how near!) and will mention one, where malevolence itself has never imagined blame."

"I wait for it," said Evelyn.

"The death of Perceval!" returned Tremaine. "Of all the cases in which man seems to have been abandoned by Heaven, and which leave the upholder of Providence without hope, I have always thought this the clearest. I am not even yet recovered from the shock which it gave me, in common with the whole nation. I saw him struck: I saw him die: and, though I had opposed his measures, I gave him, with many others, antagonists as well as friends, tears, from which I sometimes can scarcely now refrain."

Evelyn was agitated; for he had known and greatly loved this admirable person.

"He was a man," continued Tremaine, "so pure, so honest, so clear in his great office, so perfect in private life, that, to name him, seemed to be to name virtue. But that such a man, the delight of his friends, the adoration of his family, the admiration of his opponents; that one so mild, yet so brave; so single-hearted, yet so keen, should be cut off by murder in the very bosom of the senate, and of his country, where a thousand arms would have raised themselves to defend him,—that such a thing should be, leads for ever to despair of that protection from Heaven, which you tell me, not only *can be*, but *is* afforded to mankind. For, of him, how justly may we say,

> "Cadit et Ripheus justissimus unus
> Qui fuit in Teucris, et servantissimus æqui."

Here Tremaine was absolutely stopped by his feelings.

"My admiration of Mr. Perceval," replied Evelyn, with almost equal emotion, "was so great, my gratitude for his friendship so sincere, his talents were so com-

manding, his genius so penetrating, yet his simplicity so primitive, that I can only join you in this warm and merited eulogy. I may truly say, I love you the more for loving *him;* and you could not have mentioned an event more calculated to stagger me, than the catastrophe of this excellent person. Still I lose not my confidence; and, though I am terrified and astounded at the contemplation of this cruel murder, permitted, as you say, in the very lap of his country, upon one of its brightest and best citizens; though I humble myself in fear and trembling before the mysterious Being that could have warded the blow, and did not; still I am convinced all was done in wisdom—wisdom, though impenetrable. Possibly, to the victim himself it might have been mercy. That it was wrath to him so amiable, and, though unwarned, so prepared, I cannot believe. The manner of his death, to us so horrid, was, probably, to himself not worse, possibly not so bad, as some natural disease of which he might have died; certainly not nearly so bad as many of which men actually do die. It was instant and without pain; and, as I observed, if ever man was prepared on so sudden a warning, it was he.

"The rest must ever be impervious even to conjecture. The proved goodness of God, and his concern for the happiness of his creatures at large, show that this illustrious sacrifice could not be an exception. I console myself with God's own words in the mouth of the greatest of his prophets. 'The righteous perish, and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come*.'"

Tremaine was again considerably moved: "You almost convince me," said he, "even here, and certainly weaken much of my prejudice upon this lamented case. But reverting to your explanation of the sufferance of evil, I wish to know more succinctly how free-will can be said to produce evil not designed by him who gave the free-will? For, I think you will allow it to be clear, that

* Isaiah, lvii. 1.

in giving this free-will, the Almighty must have foreseen the evil it would produce, and, consequently, as he might have prevented, he must be the Author of it."

"The permitter of it, if you please," replied Evelyn; "the permitter, for the sake of an infinitely greater quantity of good, which the freedom, of which evil is a mere though necessary excrescence, occasions to mankind. And this is the short and complete answer to all the volumes of powerful ingenuity that have been written upon it in old and modern time, particularly by Bayle*."

"I remember full well," said Tremaine: "Bayle puts the case of a mother pressed by her daughter to allow her to go to a masquerade. The mother knows if she goes she will be seduced, yet suffers her; and Bayle asks if the mother, who could have prevented it, is not the causer of the guilt? I own I never could discover a refutation of this."

"It is certainly one of the most plausible of all Bayle's sophisms," replied Evelyn. "Yet the fallacy of the comparison is obvious; for the mother, according to the supposition, has no question before her, but whether the daughter should go or not. The absence of the daughter would not interfere with the masquerade; neither if it would, does the case suppose that there was any object in holding the masquerade, pregnant with some great design of infinitely greater consequence to the world at large than the preservation even of the daughter from harm, which design would be defeated unless all young people (this daughter among them) were to attend. All this should have been supposed by Bayle, to have made the cases parallel."

"How does this appear?" asked Tremaine: "or how do you make out the paramount object, in the scheme of God's moral government?"

"Why, the whole of what we call our rational liberty, and consequently virtue," answered Evelyn, "depends upon it. Without this freedom, we should be mere machines, having no responsibility, in which, perilous as

* Passim: but particularly *Paulicians*.

it is, at least the importance of a rational creature consists; for in what does our glory above irrational creatures establish itself, but reason? And what is reason but rational choice? But how *choice*, if we may not go wrong as well as right? Without this power, there could be no virtue, or at least no merit. Without misfortune, there could be no fortitude; without failures, no prudence; without diseases, no temperance; without wrongs, no justice—thus, not even the cardinal virtues."

Tremaine seemed impressed, and ruminated as if something new had broken in upon him.

"As far then," continued Evelyn, "as it is for our good and for our happiness, according to the scheme of the creation, to live in the exercise of our reason; to endeavour after virtue, through temptation and struggle; to enjoy victory the more for having bought it at such a price; and in these respects to be elevated above the brutes;—so far is free-will (liable as it is to go wrong, and consequently exposed to evil), a desirable constitution; at any rate, it *is* our constitution.

"It must be allowed, however, that whether it is a really happy constitution or not, must depend upon the question, whether the price paid for it is, or is not, too high; in other words, whether the evil or good is præpollent. And this, as I have said, is I think incontestably in favour of the good."

"I would wish this more amply proved," said Tremaine.

"It is," replied Evelyn, "by the simple question which has, not without shrewdness, been asked—whether the great bulk of mankind, and particularly perhaps of those who declaim most against their miseries, would, upon having their choice given them of life or death, decide for the latter. Some few there may be (it is to be hoped very few), who may wish to quit the world, from real and intolerable misery; some from being tired of it; some, from having nothing to do; some from being worn out, and longing for a better. It is a melancholy truth, that some do destroy themselves. But how few are all these in proportion to those who are born, and do all they can to

live, and enjoy their lives! Observe the playful child, the frolic youth, the exuberant man! View him in his different occupations!—the ravished poet, the ecstatic lover, the mettled soldier, the energetic statesman, the contemplative philosopher, the retired devotee of thought and letters! Observe even the uneducated, content with the mere pleasures of health and exercise, the enjoyment of strength and limbs, the poor man's riches, sighed for by the rich, often in vain!

"It is indeed in the simplicities of life that happiness most abounds; and these are always in our power. The whole treasures of nature,

> "The earth, the air, the common skies—

the freshness of the morning; the invigorating sun; the sedatives of eve; a walk with a friend; but if a mistress add a grace to the scene—

> "If chance, with nymph-like step, some virgin pass,
> What pleasing seemed for her now pleases more.

"Love, indeed, is the first and great kindler of life; it precedes ambition; it absorbs and concentrates all the social passions; for it is friendship refined and sublimed, if I may so say, by personal attraction, a chivalrous devotion, sweet admiration, and sweeter hope!"

"This is charming," said Tremaine, "and not the less so in so grave a subject, from being unexpected."

"It is strict argument," continued Evelyn, "for love alone gives happiness to nine-tenths of the world, and gilds the greater part of life: and the more refined, the more mental it is; that is, the greater the sources of preference or rejection—in other words, free-will—the higher and more intense is the happiness. It is the freedom here, with all its concomitant evils, that constitutes the pleasure and riches of the gift."

"You class love, then," said Tremaine, smilingly, "among the *simplicities* of life!"

"I do: for the moment it becomes sophisticated with art or luxury, or the mystifications of fashion and finery, such as are found in London or Paris—the moment a

Lady Gertrude or Lady Georgina gets hold of it, that moment adieu to what God made it. It then becomes the child of man."

"I like all this much," said Tremaine, "but you are evidently a successful lover, and have neither taken the dark side of the picture, nor mentioned other and worse evils."

"I have supposed success in the end," replied Evelyn, "to my lover, but I have no objection to throw in a few fears and disappointments, if only to heighten the pleasure of succeeding. It is for my point that I should do so—which is, that *success* implies a possibility of *failure*, but that good not only preponderates, but greatly preponderates, in the lot of man. It is so here; it is so in all the other passions. Were there not such a thing as fear, there would be no hope, 'that comes to all.' It is so with ambition, whether for power or riches; for even the miser would have no pleasure in hoarding, if there were no thieves, or money could be picked up like pebbles in the street; and who does not know that to excel, where there can be no contest, places no feather in our caps? In short, could there be no disappointment, there could be no joy! all would satiate."

"I am much satisfied," said Tremaine, "in regard to evil; but there are other difficulties, arising out of this free-will, which are to me so insurmountable as to endanger your whole argument."

"Name them," said Evelyn.

"The first is," answered Tremaine, "that if there is this free-will, it must be independent even of God. In more reverent language, God must leave it thus independent, or it can no longer be free. What, then, becomes of your whole hypothesis, that he is in all, about all, and the cause of all? How can he controul what he has left free—that is, without controul? This, to me, is unanswerable; and I am again driven to question how an invisible cause can be the real cause, the visible not? Answer me this, and you will have gone far indeed to content me."

At this moment the conversation was interrupted by the

sound of oars, and the boat which Evelyn had appointed to take him to Orleans, hove to, off the landing-place of St. Jules.

The Doctor grieved to think he would be forced to leave his half-converted friend; but, to his great pleasure, Tremaine proposed accompanying him.

"I cannot leave you," said he, "or rather, I cannot suffer you to leave me, while so much light has flashed from you upon a mind that has been strangely benighted.

"Ah! if after all....." and he looked at the cottage which at so little distance contained Georgina.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

PROVIDENCE—THE ARGUMENT FROM FREE-WILL.

> There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough hew them how we will.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

Tremaine stept into the boat, and both friends regaled themselves for a while with the exhilarating view which this water-scene always exhibited. Returning, at length to the subject, the Doctor spoke thus:—

"Your question how the invisible can be the real cause, the visible not, may be answered by a prince in a blind and barbarous age, when yet all the actors were reeking with crime, that gave a deeper blush to the red rose, and stained the white rose red. I allude to the good King Henry's reply to the barbarian Warwick, who, for his own immediate purpose, had set him free from the Tower:

> "And chiefly, therefore, I thank God and thee,
> He was the author,—thou the instrument.

"Your illustration is, at least classical," said Tremaine, "and, for Shakspeare's sake, it shall be welcome. At

the same time, the overpowering objection I have mentioned meets us at once, and brings, as I say, all into doubt. The very supposition of a governor controlling man's will, and, therefore, his actions, demolishes in an instant the whole notion of his freedom."

"I own," replied Evelyn, "you have started the objection which has most embarrassed the wise and pious in all ages—men who, with hearts full of belief, nay, of certainty, as to Providence, have yet found it difficult, nay, almost impossible, to answer it."

"How, then, have they reconciled it?" asked Tremaine.

"Like myself," returned Evelyn, "they have remained satisfied, for the reasons we have discussed, that the thing *is;* and they would not allow their belief to be shaken because they knew not *how* it is."

"This is not the mode in which philosophy is usually treated," observed Tremaine; "nor does it appear at all the way to arrive at truth. Bigotry itself is scarcely more content to be ignorant."

"There are truths," replied Evelyn, "clear enough to the heart, but hard enough to the understanding, which yet in the end are worked out by it, when both heart and understanding are properly in tune. We lately quoted Wollaston:—do you recollect one of the most beautiful descriptions ever given by a sincere lover of wisdom, in what he has said on this very truth—that, 'it is the offspring of silence, of unbroken meditation, and of thoughts often revised and corrected?"

"It is an engaging, perhaps an accurate account," said Tremaine: "but is truth, then, after all, so hard to come at?"

"All agree, you know," said Evelyn, smiling, "that she lies in a well."

"Too deep, perhaps, in this instance, to be fished up."

"I hope not, for you will recollect the great advance we have made in filling our minds with the moral certainty of the existence of what we are examining. Is a point, then, that we do not understand, to demolish what we do

understand; and this merely because we do not understand the *whole?*"

"If it imply a contradiction," rejoined Tremaine, "I should say—yes!"

"What! *without* understanding the *whole?* I allow, however," proceeded Evelyn, "this is the strong hold of scepticism, which must therefore be minutely examined; for how many implied contradictions are there to indisputable truths, which, upon examination by persons better skilled in the subject-matter, prove the contradiction to be only seeming."

"Will you name some of these?" said Tremaine, with eagerness.

"I would rather send you to men better skilled than myself in explaining them, because your satisfaction would be the greater."

"We are here, near the towers of Orleans," replied Tremaine, "and I know not where to find the sages you allude to."

"To be sure, they are chiefly in our own country," replied Evelyn; "but if you look into Boyle upon Things above Reason, or Archbishop King's admirable Sermon upon the Foreknowledge of God consistent with Man's Will, you will find many wonders expounded. There is one general answer, indeed, to be made to your difficulty, which, though I allow it does not clear it up, yet shows, I think, very fairly, from the reason why it cannot be cleared up, that we ought to be satisfied for the present to let it remain in abeyance."

"You move my curiosity," said Tremaine.

"It is this," continued Evelyn, "that you, a finite being, with a finite mind, require to know the power and manner of acting of an infinite Being, and an infinite mind. The very terms of the proposition prove that in many things, indeed in all not vouchsafed to you by the infinite mind, this is impossible. How, for example, do you conceive of the eternal Being, that he is not older to-day than yesterday, nor younger to-day than a thousand years hence?"

Tremaine allowed there was much force in this.

"But even in things intelligible, though difficult," continued Evelyn, "many are the paradoxes which seem at first unanswerable objections to a truth, yet the truth stands, spite of the paradox. One of the greatest, I know, affects what nevertheless all are most agreed upon—I mean the incorporeity of the Deity. That God is a spirit, you, at least, do not doubt. That he should move and govern the material world of matter, can never be explained. And yet that spirit *can* move matter is obvious, in every voluntary motion that our bodies make.

"Again, that the world should continue to revolve round its own axis, hung upon nothing, is equally difficult, equally contradictory to all our human finite notions of the laws of physics. Yet, who doubts it? Who is surprised at it; What tutor or tutoress does not teach it? What child not understand it?

"If you ponder upon this, which I see you do, how much food will many other seeming contradictions afford you? What think you of the hyperbolic curve, which for ever approaches nearer and nearer to a given line, yet never, by possibility, can touch it?

"What say you to the most received and undisputed notion of all really philosophical deists, as well as of the disciples of a more sublime religion—that God made the world out of nothing? Yet this is obviously contradictory to that other received philosophical notion, that nothing can come of nothing.

"If these things excite wonder, what will the uninstructed say to the paradox quoted by the Archbishop to the House of Lords, to whom he was preaching the sermon I mentioned, in which it was asserted, 'that a negative quality multiplied by a number less than nothing, shall produce a magnitude greater than any assigned.'

"'Perhaps,' says this *naïve* Archbishop, (although, I dare say, fully impressed with the dignity of the august body he was addressing), 'this may appear a riddle, and full of contradictions, even to a great part of my auditors. Yet, if the most ignorant will have patience, and apply to the skilful in these matters, they will soon find the

seeming contradiction vanish, and the assertions not only certain, but plain and easy truth.'"

"Were my Lords satisfied?" asked Tremaine, with something like a sneer.

"Possibly not," answered Evelyn; "but as the demonstration could, no doubt, have been afforded, if they had had the patience, and used it as recommended, I dare say they were content with it on trust."

"I would rather," said Tremaine, "at present, come to more tangible, and more intelligible things, and learn what really seeming contradictions have yet been *proved* no contradictions."

"Before the irradiation of modern science, you will find them in numbers," answered Evelyn. "For example, before gravity was demonstrated, who would have believed in the antipodes? One unfortunate philosopher was, I think, put to death for proving them.

"Before the prism, who would not have thought it a contradiction to say there was no colour in the rainbow? And even now, could we imagine a philosopher among Indian savages, with genius enough to conceive, and boldness enough to assert, that in other latitudes water might become so hard as that armies might march or encamp upon it; that in one part of the globe the night and day continued for six months each, or that summer took place at Christmas! winter in June!—who would not disbelieve the philosopher on account of the seeming impossibility?

"Again, let us suppose such a barbarian philosopher to revisit his native country, after having travelled, and to assert that he had seen nations who lived in ships, and could traverse ten thousand miles of ocean, by the help merely of a small card, with a needle hung upon it!—would he not be regarded as a liar? or, perhaps, be put to death, like my poor philosopher of the antipodes?"

"You put this well," said Tremaine; "but is it sufficient to rest upon the mere supposed possibility of clearing up the palpable contradiction between free-will and Providence which I have mentioned? Ought not some probable, or, at the very least, really possible ground to

be shown for supposing the thing susceptible of explanation?"

"If we prove the Providence," said Evelyn, "(which I think *has* been proved), this is enough to exempt us from any fear founded upon the apparent contradiction. Providence once established *per se*, to say that the ways in which God, a being so beyond our understandings, knows and directs things which are unknown, and never can be known to us, such finite miserable worms, beats down, I think at once, much of the objection.

"Feeling that Providence is true, and also that the free-will of man is true, and looking for a reconciliation of the seeming opposition between these two—not in the ways of *man*, but of *God*, it is enough to any heart well affected to the subject, to leave the difficulty there. And here, again, I agree with the excellent Wollaston, when he says, 'It is far from being new that our faculties should disclose to us the existence of things, and then drop us in our inquiries how they are.'

"But I by no means wish it to be thought that authority alone, if I may call it so, is to close this subject between us; because I think if only a possibility can be shown, whether from fair analogies, or even from *imaginary* cases, that the two powers can be reconciled, it is a duty to show this, provided, if it *is* shown, even as a *possibility*, or an *imaginary* case, you will allow the difficulty vanishes."

"I desire nothing so much," replied Tremaine.

"Had you not better propound your difficulty more distinctly?" said Evelyn.

"It is too well known to detain us long," replied Tremaine, "and I confess it goes to the bottom of all morals. If a soldier is bound hand and foot by his officer, how can he be answerable to him for not fighting? or if he obey his officer by fighting, how can he be punished for having fought? You tell me that Providence wills that a state shall be ruined, or a particular man cut off by assassination. To do this, some Attila or Bonaparte, without the smallest pretence of right, nay, with a premeditated determination to wrong, invades the state; or,

to revert to a sad subject again, some Bellingham or Nicholson* shall lie in wait and commit the murder. I ask, if Providence had directed this, how are any of them guilty? I say if this was God's will, and if, in consequence of that will, Bellingham's sense of injury (true or false, rational or irrational), prompted his hand, how was he guilty, and why was he punished?

"I do not, as you suppose, think murderers are not to be hanged, or invaders not resisted; but is it not more rational to suppose that Heaven leaves all this to ourselves, to take measures according to our reason, than that we should be involved in the inextricable doubt as to our conduct, which your doctrine implies?"

"Your supposition is not less," said Evelyn, "than that if God is the disposer of man's actions, inasmuch as many of them are criminal, he must be the author of crime."

"It is so," replied Tremaine.

"I wish it were as easy," rejoined Evelyn, "to account for the mysterious Providence that permitted the events you have alluded to, as to defend Heaven from this imputation. For, though the wickedness of Bellingham made him a proper instrument, in the hands of the Supreme Disposer to effect this fearful, this inscrutable dispensation, it by no means follows that he was *made* wicked for that purpose."

"I see it," said Tremaine: "you mean that the death of Mr. Perceval was the will of Heaven—the crime of Bellingham his own."

"Exactly so," observed Evelyn; "and this is, perhaps, the best comment, in few words, that can be made upon an axiom which, perhaps, contains all that can be said on the subject:—'Man *proposes*, God *disposes*.'"

"Still there is a difficulty," continued Tremaine; "and

* Nicholson, it perhaps may be remembered, was the servant and murderer of Mr. and Mrs. Thomson Bonar, two most respectable and virtuous persons. He declared he had no quarrel with them; it was not for gain; and it was not premeditated. The thought came into his mind, and he executed it instantly. He was not mad.

though of another kind, not, perhaps, so soon got over: I mean that founded upon the foreknowledge of this event in the Divine mind; for, if foreknown, it must have been resolved under all the circumstances that attended it. The murder and the murderer were, therefore, predestinated: how, then, could Bellingham fail to be the assassin? and if so, how help being guilty?"

"The objection is neither new, nor without embarrassment," replied Evelyn: "but, I own, I thought it had been so ably exploded long ago, that I wonder, with the researches you have evidently made, you have not yourself been long since satisfied. The whole difficulty of predestination, as to *the events* of life, seems to me to have been made far too much of, and by no means warrants the trouble that has been wasted upon it." Here he stopped.

"I am all ear," said Tremaine.

"Why, as to events of life, what can be more clear than the answer that has always been afforded? They do not happen, *because* God foresees them; but he foresees them, because they happen."

"Still," said Tremaine, "if they could not have happened otherwise, how is the agent free?"

"You assume," returned Evelyn, "that they could not have happened otherwise. We say they might; only we add, what is true, that they could not have happened as they did, and not have happened as they did. There could be but one event, and that event, therefore, might be foreseen."

"Then, surely, it was predestinated," said Tremaine, "and could not but have happened as it did."

"This is the deepest of all the fallacies that mislead us," replied Evelyn; "and the cause is, that we judge *after* the fact. But, I repeat, an event cannot happen, and not happen. Only one thing can be said of it—either that it did or did not, after the time is gone by, when it was or was not to take place. We who live afterwards know the event and say, that having happened, it must *necessarily* have happened. I beg to know why? What proof is there that it was not perfectly *contingent?*

What difficulty, that any one endowed with the gift of foresight, might not foresee how the *contingency* would be disposed of?"

"I would illustrate it by prophecy," said Tremaine. "A prophet foretells a fact. Is it possible that the fact cannot happen, if the prophet speak true?"

"Certainly not," replied Evelyn; "but what is this more than that man being free to act, the prophet foresaw how he would use his free-will; that is, how he would act."

"Yet, suppose the prophet foretell to any given man what he will do; is it not competent," asked Tremaine, "for the man to resolve to do just the contrary, and so belie the prophet? or if not competent, what becomes of free-will?"

"This is like a subtlety in Barataria," answered Evelyn. "Let me ask you, does a man always do what he resolves to do? And if not, may not his departure from his resolve be the very consequence of his free-will? Cæsar resolved not to pardon Deiotarus, notwithstanding all that Cicero might say. But he heard Cicero, and then pardoned him, notwithstanding his resolve. Was Cæsar free or not?"

"I am conquered," said Tremaine, "and glad to be so."

"To return, then, to our lamented subject," replied Evelyn: "Milton, with as good argument as poetry, will help us here, in what he makes the Omnipotent say of our first parents when they *chose* to fall:—

> "Ingrate! he had of me
> All he would have; I made him just and right,
> Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.

"Again:—

> "They, therefore, as to right belong'd,
> So were created; nor can justly accuse
> Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
> As if Predestination *over-rul'd*
> Their will, disposed by absolute decree
> Or high foreknowledge. They themselves decreed
> Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
> Foreknowledge had no *influence* on their fault,
> *Which had no less prov'd certain, unforeknown.*

"Now take it in the other way, and suppose that, foreseeing an intended murder, the Almighty has resolved to protect an illustrious victim. He may do so without interfering with the murderer's free-will."

"I beseech you explain," said Tremaine.

"Why, even if he interposed by a miracle, and an angel is actually seen presenting a shield to the bullet, the *event* is prevented, but the crime is equally intended, and the will of the criminal uninvaded."

"This might be confessed," said Tremaine, "but the miracle never happens."

"Not as a miracle," answered Evelyn; "but if the blow is warded by other means, I mean by natural causes, yet directed from above, the victim is equally saved, and the free-agency equally preserved."

"The direction from above is the question," persisted Tremaine. "Remember the emphatic lines of Pope,—

> "Shall burning Ætna, if a sage requires,
> Forget to thunder, and recall her fires?
> When the loose mountain trembles from on high,
> Shall gravitation cease, if you go by?
> Or some old temple nodding to its fall,
> For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall?

"This, in fact, is the great stumbling-block; for, will a storm at sea, brought about by the regular laws of physics, cease, because a good man (even a saint), happens to be caught in it; or, if an expedition in ever so righteous a cause be overtaken by the trade-wind, will the trade-wind cease to blow in its usual direction because the expedition will be defeated if it do not? On the other hand, will the musket of a wicked man in a battle, when levelled at a good man, burst in his hand? or will the good man's pistol, when defending his house from robbers and murderers, be Heaven-directed to defeat them?

"A child is sick: the afflicted and pious father implores Providence to bless the endeavour of the physician. Does Providence suddenly enlighten the physician's mind, discover new drugs for him, or give superior efficacy to old ones, in order to grant the prayer? If

it do this, it is miracle; if it do not, though the child recover, it is not Providence. So also in the reverse of this; if the physician's knowledge is for a time clouded on purpose that the child may die, it is a miracle; if it die because the physician cannot cure, it is not Providence. It was hence that I attributed our late escape, for which you scolded me, to good fortune; but as I saw no miracle, nothing even surprising, or out of the common course of things, I could not but believe myself right.

"There are stories, indeed, which, giving the imagination an agreeable surprise, and cheating it, as it were, into an illusion it is always fond of, for a moment startle us; but they will not bear the test of inquiry, and a wise man laughs at his own dream during the fond period that beguiled him of his reason."

"Let us, however, have our stories," said Evelyn.

"They are scarcely worth repeating," returned Tremaine; "yet I have sometimes fastened upon them with delight. But the days are gone when I was thus happy, and thus deceived."

"You can at least remember," said Evelyn, "what it was that so pleased and so deceived you?"

"Yes! I recollect the impression made upon me when scarce a youth, by an account of a dog which rescued a nobleman of the North, when on his travels in Germany, from a designed murder, by preventing his going to a bed, which sunk through the floor in the middle of the night. The whole was a romance, and I totally forget the authority."

"I could match your dog with another," said Evelyn, "which *is* authenticated—Lord Litchfield's!"

"He was found in his master's room," interrupted Tremaine, taking up the story, "where he never had been used to lie. The valet, who undressed Lord Litchfield, did all he could to turn him out, but the dog would not be caught; the man persisted with eagerness till his lord told him to let him remain. That same night, the same man attempted to kill Lord Litchfield, but was prevented by an alarm given by this very dog.

There are a hundred such stories, but I count nothing upon them. This however was, I believe, as you say, authentic."

"There was at least a tradition of it in the family," resumed Evelyn, "and I rather hope it is true. But, true or false, I delight in both your dogs, because it is as good an illustration as I could wish of the *possibility* of the interference in the actions and fates of men, without preventing free agency. Both your robbers were here left free, yet their victims were protected; the feasibleness of which, with a view to show the possibility of reconciling your contradiction, is all I want to explain.

"There is another story told by Hervey, of two men who had been hunting all day, and slept together at night. One dreamt he was still hunting, and exclaiming 'I will kill him,' laid hold of his knife, still in his sleep. The other, who was awake, hearing this, leaped out of bed, and, being in safety, stopped to see what he would do. The dreamer then began stabbing that part of the bed where his companion had lain; and Hervey, not without reason, thinks he had been *providentially* kept awake. In all probability, it not only saved his own life, but the dreamer's also, who would have found it hard to have escaped, by laying the death to a dream.

"Upon this subject, I need not remind you of Simonides, whose life was preserved by being merely called out of a room, a minute before the roof fell in and destroyed those that remained."

"In these instances," returned Tremaine, "I grant the seeming reconcilement, because here is no meddling with the laws of nature; but upon that part of the argument you have not touched. I remember, indeed, your respectable old Sherlock endeavours to build much upon this, but never, in my mind, could succeed, because he proves too much. He tells you in terms that, to be sure, the general laws by which the world exists, the motions of the heavenly bodies, the seasons, and a long *et cætera*, cannot be interrupted; that fire must burn, and water drown; but then, again, that there are things

of less consequence, such as the winds and the rains, and the thunder, the application of which God reserves to himself, in order to influence men's conduct by punishing wickedness and rewarding virtue. There is also chance and accident, which, be sure, is Heaven's special province, because distinct from all rules, to be used for the same purpose. I own I did not expect from a man so learned, and not a bad reasoner upon the whole, to condescend to such refutable positions. They are not even specious, since a child with only a smattering in physics, would tell you that wind, and rain, and thunder, are all governed by immutable laws, all proceed from known and regular causes, which, therefore, will produce regular effects, and these can no more be uncertain than gravitation itself. He quotes, I think, Sennacherib, whose army, on arriving before Jerusalem, was all destroyed, or rendered useless, by one night's rain, as if the rain would not have fallen exactly where it did, and at the time it did, whether Sennacherib had arrived there or not.

"As to his chance and fortune, they are no better; for they, too, are always the effect of known causes, only, from not having been foreseen, they are called by those names. That they operate of themselves, without assignable causes, it is even blindness to assert."

"Yet it was to this chance and this fortune that you attributed our recent escape," observed Evelyn.

"True," said Tremaine, and was silent.

"With all this," proceeded Evelyn, "in which I partly agree with you, the Dean may be right in the main."

"Now this is more than I expected from *you*," said Tremaine.

"My exposition is very simple," returned Evelyn; "for, though I am really not natural philosopher enough to know so exactly the causes of rain and wind, as to pronounce what it is that increases or diminishes them *so irregularly as they are increased or diminished*, and I am therefore not prepared to say with you, that this is childish in the Dean, yet I will meddle not at all with your laws of physics. I allow that the trade-wind must

blow, the rain probably fall, and, certainly, your old ruin totter, without waiting for Chartres, if the course of nature has arrived at the proper point. I want no miracle to alter that course. But you have not adverted to the possibility for the Almighty so to dispose of the conduct of persons who are to be affected by these regular phenomena in physics, as to bring them within their scope precisely at the given moment, when the effect intended to be produced by them *will* be produced."

"This is new," said Tremaine, thoughtfully.

"Take the old invader, Sennacherib, for example," pursued Evelyn; "you may speak true, though I know it not, when you say the rain would have fallen on the night when he arrived at Jerusalem, whether he had arrived or not. But you know not how that arrival was brought about; what lurking, latent cause, unknown, perhaps, to himself, operated upon the spirits or understandings, the passions or views of him or his captains; in short, you know not the thousand little accidents, producing a thousand different motives, yet all tending to one point, which, by quickening or retarding his march, did, in effect, produce the arrival in question exactly at the time it did.

"The consequence, then, is clear, and all the difference between Sherlock and me is, that he makes, or seems to make, Providence send the rain to destroy Sennacherib's army; I send the army to be destroyed."

"You have still to make out," persisted Tremaine, but very thoughtfully, "the little latent causes which influenced so many persons in directing this eventful march."

"That is not my business," replied Evelyn. "I am merely called upon to relieve Sherlock's difficulty, and all the way through, I again beg you to recollect that I am not bound to prove what I can know nothing of—namely, the governing principles which impel a man's conduct in a given case, but *merely with a view to our point*, the possibility that an event *may* be regulated by Providence, without interfering with the laws of physics or the free-will of man."

"You have cleared Sherlock better than I expected," said Tremaine, "and will clear him quite, if you can do away one other difficulty, which, I own, has foiled me whenever I have approached it.

Evelyn was all attention.

"It is," continued Tremaine, "that drawn from the apparent *miraculous* interference with the ordinary course of things which must always be supposed, if the latent *influential* causes you have alluded to (not merely in the case of Sennacherib, but in any other), are the immediate effect of God's will, and would not *otherwise* have taken effect. If they would *otherwise* have existed, there is an end of the *Providence*."

"Say, rather, of the immediate *interposition* interfering with the ordinary course of things, in other words, of miracle," replied Evelyn; "yet I trust this difficulty will be transient, provided we go but deep enough."

"As deep as you choose to lead me," said Tremaine.

"From the attributes, then, of the Deity, which you have admitted," pursued Evelyn, "I need not ask you whether you have any difficulty in allowing that the whole map of what we call Time, is always before him, and that from the moment that time to us began, to the *now* in which we are speaking, everything was known at once, in all its relations and bearings, all its immediate effects, and all its remote consequences."

"I am willing to allow this," said Tremaine.

"You also, of course, allow the whole train of second causes, one succeeding and producing another, and all without miracle, from the remotest time, in other words, from the final cause of all," observed Evelyn.

"I do this also," said Tremaine.

"Well, then, the causes of even that leaf which is lifted by a breeze of wind from the shore yonder, might be traced, had we faculties to do it, up to the first universal cause, as far back as when the universe began."

"An intricate supposition," observed Tremaine, "but possibly I might admit even this."

"Much more, then," continued Evelyn, "or at least quite as soon, you will admit every motion of the mind,

the consequence of everything by which mind can be moved; in other words, the latent influential causes we are discussing, at whatever time they may happen."

"For the sake of argument, agreed," said Tremaine.

"Then," observed Evelyn, "our subject is concluded; for the Supreme First Cause having all consequences, throughout all subsequent time, before him at the original creation or institution of things, may so frame that institution as to produce, even in the mere course and order of nature, and without miracle, exactly what effects he pleases at any given epoch of time."

"The field you open is immense," cried Tremaine, "and the excursions wide, wild, and uncertain!"

"Wide, if you will, but not wild or uncertain," answered Evelyn; "I should rather say they were certain."

"Suppose I grant this?" said Tremaine.

"You will then grant everything," rejoined his friend; "for no one latent or unperceived motive even now, arising from whatever cause, whether moral or physical, whether to affect the spirits, and, therefore, the will and judgment in man, or producing any event in nature—for example, the march of an army, or a storm overtaking it—nothing of this, happen when it will, but must have been cast in the beginning of time, and the very laws of nature, perhaps, framed with a view to bring it about!"

"The supposition is stupendous," exclaimed Tremaine.

"But far from impossible, and if possible, why then there is an end of miracle in the combination of second causes," said Evelyn.

Tremaine folded his arms, became silent and pensive, eyed all the landscape of the Loire, and for a time seemed lost; till, at last, breaking silence, "Do you know," said he, "your exposition has delighted me? It is new, and, to me, cogent; at least I have no answer at hand, and I am sure I seek for none."

"This is, indeed, a great point gained," returned Evelyn.

"But as to the chance and fortune which Sherlock insists upon?" resumed Tremaine.

"Nothing can be more true than what you have said of them," replied Evelyn; "but, at the same time, that which produces them is susceptible of the same conversion to particular ends, as the phenomena of nature we have been discussing. You called our escape from the bullet and from the dog *lucky;* I felt it to be *providential.* Your *now* right notion of chance, which is another word for luck, but which you very properly say, means only a thing not intended, and therefore not foreseen, arising out of things that *are* intended and foreseen, confutes yourself. For, though it could not be foreseen that a snake should cross the gamekeeper's path, and make him miss his aim, and the act of the snake's creeping there was no miracle, yet, in the manner we have discussed, it might be the original act of Providence, and both the free-agency of the gamekeeper and the law of physics preserved.

"So, in closing the gate as we did, if we had been two yards farther from it than we were, that act might have been prevented, but we know not by what secret operation of the Almighty's goodness on the natural faculties of the dog, or on our own, we arrived at the gate just in time to close it."

"I might agree to this," said Tremaine, "but for one great difficulty, which strikes me here, but not certainly for the first time."

"Name it."

"You tell me of the government of a man's conduct, by perhaps secret motives, and I allow, from what you have explained, that it may be *providential* without being *miraculous.* But whether open or secret, if these motives are instilled into us by the Almighty, who knows the effect they will have, you at once destroy the very freedom of will you are upholding. For, though there is no outward or perceptible force, yet there is an inward and imperceptible force, and the man being equally under force, is equally bereft of freedom."

"The answer," returned Evelyn, "is still the same. *Action may be controlled, yet the will left free.* For, though I say that motives may be instilled, it does not

follow that the will is not *freely* exercised in being swayed by them.

"Knowing your temper, for example, I may set certain arguments before you, with a view to persuade you to a certain conduct; or I may lend you a particular book, or send you a friend, with the same view. I succeed; yet would you hold yourself *governed*, or allow that you had not exercised your own discretion, in agreeing with me, on the object proposed?"

"I should not," said Tremaine.

"Well, then, in the same manner, may not the great Disposer proceed to offer such motives as he knows may incline the free judgment of man to a particular decision, leading him to do, or refrain from doing, a particular act? Here the act is done, or let alone, by a will perfectly free, yet the end of Providence is accomplished, as much as if the will had had no discretion. The mode of doing this must for ever be unknown to us, but never taking place except through second causes, it is not miraculous, and no force is imposed."

"Will you amplify this a little more?" said Tremaine, "it demands much reflection."

"Were I to do so," returned Evelyn, "it is inconceivable what a number of petty motives, trifling actions, and trumpery passions, might be brought into review. It would almost make one lend one's-self to Walpole's flippant remark, that a quarrel between two bed-chamber women brought about the peace of Utrecht. It is certain that while old Sarah was affecting to despise the 'ragged boy' Hill, and turning up her nose at her quondam creature and cousin Abigail*, she knew not how it conduced to place a weak and jealous mistress in the hands of an intriguing statesman†, who without it pro-

* The reader here is not to be told of the rivalry between the cousins, the Duchess of Marlborough and Mrs. Abigail Hill, married to Mr. Masham, afterwards Lord Masham, of Oats. Colonel Hill, her brother, whom the Duchess, in all the vulgarity of a woman in a passion, calls a ragged boy, afforded, by his forced promotion, the first proof to the world of Marlborough's decline.

† Lord Oxford.

bably could not have overset the Prince Marlborough, and given peace to Europe. If that statesman himself had not felt affronted and undervalued by his quondam colleagues, probably he too would not have been ready and desirous to seize upon the vacant possession of the Queen.

"Observe," continued Evelyn, seeing Tremaine prepared to contest it, "I do not say that this was either the only or the chief cause that governed good Mrs. Morley *, but it greatly assisted as a second cause; and many such causes, to use the language of Bacon, which I quoted just now, 'confederate and linked together,' produced the disposition to peace, least expected in England; and this (in the same language) drives the mind 'to Providence and Deity.'"

"I wish I could make this out," said Tremaine.

"You had no difficulty in the case of Sennacherib." returned Evelyn, "and it would not be a hard, though I allow it would be a speculative task, to imagine by what influential second causes the blood, and spirits, and passions of the Duchess were moved to the precise point which disgusted the Queen. We cannot dissect our minds, but we know that

> "In the soul
> Are many lesser faculties, that serve
> Reason as chief. Among these, the fancy next
> Her office holds; of all external things
> Which the five watchful senses represent,
> She forms imaginations, aery shapes,
> Which reason, joining or disjoining, frames
> All what we affirm, or what deny, and call
> Our knowledge, our opinion.

"Thus you see that fancy excites, for reason to determine; and though you tell me (as perhaps you will), that fancy is nothing but the physical effect of the warmer or colder temperament of the brain, exercised upon what

* The private name which Queen Anne, in the days of her romance with the Duchess, assumed in her letters: the Duchess, in the same spirit, calling herself Mrs. Freeman. Charming moments! But they were moments. Do not laugh at them, Reader; you have had them yourself.

we have seen or heard; until you also prove to me that all this was beyond the controul of the all-foreseeing Deity, when he began the history of the world, you cannot be satisfied that motives are not presented to us, which, *though we are perfectly free to adopt or reject them, so as to make our conduct our own*, yet are they all the while conducing to some great scheme of government, in which, while we seem to manage, we are but subordinate actors."

"There is certainly much in this," said Tremaine, "and the more it is illustrated by cases, the better."

"It would take us too long," replied Evelyn; "but I cannot do it better, perhaps, than by referring you to the House of Commons, in which you were once so eager."

"This will be, at least, remarkable," observed Tremaine.

"Why, on how many occasions, night after night, have members upon members, particularly of party men on both sides of the House, yourself among them, voted upon things (I must, of course, say according to your consciences) which would never have been thought of, because never presented to you, except from the management of one or two, or, at most, half a dozen leaders. These have already settled (out of the House) all that shall be done within it; yet, men like yourself, have always felt independent in your votes."

"No doubt!" said Tremaine.

"So man, in choosing or refusing," replied Evelyn, "is liable to be led, yet free to determine."

"You have made out this, too, better than I expected," proceeded Tremaine; "but if I understand you, we must at best fall back upon our old difficulty, since you prove all to be the act of Heaven, the leader, not of man, the led. For although you guard yourself by the salvo that the will is free to determine, yet if the motives presented are sufficient to produce the determination, I see no difference between that and positive force. In your illustration, you supposed a few leaders to propound all business of the House of Commons. They, then, in effect do that business; and if so, though those who

adopt it may in fact be free, yet the junta alone are principally and really responsible. The effect of this upon our question is obvious; for, from your own account, it is Heaven that moves us, though we think we move ourselves, in the same manner as I toss an apple before a child, to make him move in the direction I wish him. Thus, then, all our acts are God's acts; and though, spite of the mechanism you have supposed, some responsibility may attach upon us, yet, in effect, all that is done, being done by Heaven, the evil and sins of the world have Heaven for their instigator. This is fearful, and from you I looked for a far different exposition."

"This is no more than what I expected from one so keen in objection," replied Evelyn. "Nay, I will own to you, I think it the greatest difficulty in the whole subject. Still I think it may be solved."

"If it can, you will have my eternal thanks," said Tremaine.

"At least, be assured," continued Evelyn, "that I mean no such impiety as that Heaven is the author of sin. In order to this, I would beg you for ever to keep in mind, that there is a broad and marked distinction *between an event, and the moral conduct that produces it.* The event, according to us, must always be God's, either by his willing, or suffering it to be brought about; the manner of bringing it about may be entirely the agent's."

"This is important," said Tremaine.

"Again, the agency may be of a nature either virtuous or vicious, according to the character of the agent employed; which character is his own, and is not affected from the mere circumstance of his being used as an agent. A physician may use violent or gentle remedies, as best suits the nature of the case, yet is he not the author of the poison or the emollient which it may be necessary to administer."

"Proceed," said Tremaine.

"If a poison, therefore, be to be administered as a medicine, the physician does not make it more a poison by mixing it up, or giving it to his patient. So, if the

Almighty, in his wisdom, choose to remove even a good man from the world, or, for impenetrable purposes of his own, to occasion his downfal, or try him by any severity of discipline (of all which we can never be the judges), should he do this through the instrumentality of wickedness, and a man who, in his free-agency, has become ripe and ready for this instrumentality....."

"I see your meaning," said Tremaine; "and allow that Heaven, though it ordain the event, does not cause the wickedness."

"On the contrary," returned Evelyn; "so determined might the Deity be to leave man perfectly free, that in casting the scheme of his dispensations when he originally created mankind, he might, according to my theory, from foreseeing what every man would do in given circumstances, have originally shaped his own government of nature accordingly."

"This would allow him even to alter or accommodate his plans; but is it possible," said Tremaine, "that you can mean to go so far?"

"It is clear, from all that we see of the powers of God," replied Evelyn, "that nothing can happen without him; and also so clear, that he has left us free to determine of ourselves upon our actions; that I am ready to to go any length, not amounting to impossibility, in explaining the seeming inconsistency."

"Do you mean, then," asked Tremaine, "that if any very wicked man—Borgia, for example—had chosen in his free-will to be virtuous, that the course of things originally in the Divine mind would have been affected by it?"

"I go all that length," said Evelyn.

"This is the most extraordinary doctrine I ever heard," observed Tremaine, yet seriously revolving the train to which it led.

"It is not altogether new," returned Evelyn; "at least there is a very curious dialogue of Laurentius Valla, quoted and enlarged by Leibnitz, in his Essay upon the Goodness of God, and the Free-will of Man. In this, he supposes Sextus Tarquinius to consult the Delphic

oracle as to his fate. It is predicted. He complains. The oracle refers him to Jupiter and the Destinies; to whom he bemoans himself, and says, they might have made him happy if they had pleased. Jupiter answers, it is you who determine your own lot. You *choose* to go to Rome to be a king, and I know best what will happen there if you do. Give up going to Rome, *and the Destinies will spin another thread for you.* Sextus does not see why he should give up the chances of being a king, and thinks he may avoid the evils of a visit to Rome, and be a good monarch notwithstanding. He goes, and is undone."

"This is amusing," said Tremaine; "but how does this come up to your doctrine?"

"The story is not ended," observed Evelyn. "Theodosius, the high-priest and favourite of Jupiter, is a little shocked at the answer to Sextus, and submissively begs to know whether he might not have been allowed to be a good king, as he desired. Jupiter, through Minerva, shows him the palace of the Destinies, in which are the plans of many worlds, varying according to the choice and actions of men. In some of these, he sees Sextus, under another *choice*, exceedingly happy; but he had chosen as above stated, and the plan of the world he was in was shaped accordingly.'

"This is a profound speculation," observed Tremaine.

"It is so," said Evelyn; "but I wish you to pursue it. It will show you that men who have chosen ill, may be used by the Almighty for his own purposes, yet they, and not Heaven, be the authors of their own sin. Having chosen sinfully beyond redemption, God may then make use of them, and for a while appear to let them prosper, till his purposes are answered. It is in this sense that many a scriptural phrase of seemingly dangerous ambiguity is to be explained, where God is supposed to *harden* men in their sins; to have hardened Pharaoh's heart, for instance; than which, without such explanation, few expressions can be so liable to abuse."

"This account is not without satisfaction," said Tremaine; "for I own this very point has often provoked, as well as baffled my inquiries."

"You will observe," continued Evelyn, "that I have supposed the case of a suffering good man destined to trial. Let us now imagine a wicked man destined to punishment. Here, it is obvious, sin may be made use of to punish sin, without his being the cause, who directs where it shall fall. As if a tyrant or private villain be cut off by another tyrant or private villain."

"I wish this explained," said Tremaine.

"I do it thus," replied Evelyn: "Suppose a man prepare his weapon, determined to murder A, and waylay him for that purpose. God, by his secret agency, influences A not to pass that way, but impels B, a very sinful man, to do so,—who is mistaken and murdered by the original plotter. Here the sin of murder was already complete in the assassin's mind, caused by his own free-will alone, and cannot be attributed to Heaven, though the fall of the blow where it did fall, may be so attributed and justified too."

"This is intelligible," said Tremaine: "but suppose the case of the good man cut off by this secret influence over the assassin. For example, could we suppose the air-drawn dagger of Macbeth real, and see it marshalling him the way to Duncan, must we not rather pity his weakness, and suppose him hardly dealt with in being so tempted?"

"Everything fancied by the great bard is so classical, so sacred," replied Evelyn, "that I cannot be surprised at your warmth—I might even join in it. But, according to our principles, even this case is not an exception. Macbeth was already condemned, past redemption, in sin, by his having listened to the temptations of the weird sisters, and the goadings of his wife. He might, therefore, be selected, as the proper instrument of Heaven's purpose, without its enhancing his sin in the eye of the Deity. He had sacrificed to the devil, and renounced God; what wonder that God should

renounce him, or supposing these beautiful horrors true, permit them,

> " By the strength of their illusion,
> To draw him on to his confusion.

" This, however, is an imaginary case, and respect for Shakspeare alone has made me stop to answer your question upon it. If really there were such an air-drawn dagger impelling a man, *not otherwise so inclined*, to murder, depend upon it, it would not be the work of Heaven,—which can never instigate to sin; nor can the secret influences I have mentioned, be used otherwise than for goodness and justice. For instance, in the case I supposed above, where A, resolving to waylay and murder B, Heaven secretly influences B not to take the road he intended."

" If it influence at all, why not for harm as well as for good?" asked Tremaine.

" Simply, because everything we see and know of the Deity, the whole frame and constitution of things, every contrivance of nature, prove him to be good and just. Throughout his works all is instituted for good, nothing for evil."

" Yet he made man," said Tremaine, " and, consequently, the evil that belongs to him."

" *There is no scheme or contrivance for this evil in his composition*," replied Evelyn. " It is, therefore, adventitious and his own, as I have shown you before."

" How it could spring from himself without Heaven, is the question?" observed Tremaine.

" Milton will answer you better than I," returned Evelyn:—

> " When lust,
> By unchaste looks, loose gesture, and foul talk,
> But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
> Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
> The soul grows clotted by contagion,
> Imbodies and imbrutes, till she quite lose
> The divine property of her first being.

" This fine doctrine of Plato he goes on with, as you

know, to account for the unwillingness of such self-depraved creatures to quit the sensual world they love, even for Heaven; and hence, he says,

> "Those thick and gloomy shadows damp,
> Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres,
> Ling'ring and sitting by a new-made grave,
> As loth to leave the body that it loved."

"Beautifully terrible!" exclaimed Tremaine.

"And well reasoned as beautiful," said Evelyn, "allowing it as mere allegory or illustration. It shows how easy it is for the mind, left to itself and its own free-will, to be self-corrupted, self-degraded, till 'unmoulding reason's mintage,' it converts men into real brutes, while they,

> "So perfect is their misery,
> Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
> But boast themselves more comely than before."

"This is charming language," said Tremaine, "and accounts too well for much of the wickedness that exists, without accusing Heaven. Still, upon this secret power of influencing, if it lead to a specific crime, I cannot feel satisfied; for, with all the wickedness of man, the individual crime must be Heaven's."

"You will recollect," replied Evelyn, "that our disquisition is under a difficulty that always attends generals, when we seek satisfaction as to a particular case. Be assured, I nowhere pretend that if even a wicked man be instigated by Heaven to a very wicked act, *which he would not otherwise have certainly committed*, he would be made responsible for that act. But we have been all the way through in the regions of fancy, or rather of obscurity—of uncertainty as to facts, and of hypothetical contingency. Your dramatic case, therefore, can admit of no absolute demonstration. Still, if I am allowed to command my possibilities (as Parnell in his Hermit), my principle, if it is sound, must be capable of proof."

"This it is but fair to allow you," said Tremaine.

"Why, then, even in the air-drawn dagger of Macbeth," said Evelyn, "I could suppose it might send him, Heaven-marshalled, to the chamber of Duncan, and yet the blame be all his own."

"This, indeed, would be ingenious," cried Tremaine.

"Admit," continued Evelyn, "that Duncan, for wise and providential purposes, not to be scanned by us, might be destined a sacrifice. Admit that Macbeth, after an at least intended and believed intercourse with hell, *had determined upon that sacrifice.* Admit, therefore, that the sacrifice was to be made, and by him."

"What then?" asked Tremaine.

"Why, then, the manner of it might be Heaven's, yet not the sin."

"Could the manner make any difference," cried Tremaine, "so as to justify the interposition?"

"I know not," replied Evelyn, "and at best we are, as I said, in the regions of fancy; but if fancy could suppose it, I have a right to make a supposition."

"Agreed," said Tremaine.

"Why, then, can I imagine that, if Duncan was to fall, and his throne be usurpred by a wicked murderer, it might very much raise the horror of the deed, so as to kindle the desire of vengeance that followed, and accomplish the restoration of his family in the way it was accomplished, if he fell, as he did fall, under the roof of the assassin, with whom he was

> "In double trust,
> First as his kinsman and his subject,
> Strong both against the deed; then as his host,
> Who should against his murderer shut the door,
> Not bear the knife himself."

"I confess this is at least ingenious," said Tremaine, "and, for Shakspeare's sake, I could almost believe it."

"Could you follow a better guide?" asked Evelyn. "Indeed he goes on to say, that the virtues of Duncan

> "Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
> The deep damnation of his taking off."

"You delight me," said Tremaine; "for though, as you say, this is but an imaginary case, yet it is easy to extend it by application to other cases that are real."

"We know in point of fact," continued Evelyn, "that the manner of an action has often produced consequences disproportioned to what might be expected from it: the deaths of Lucretia and Virginia, for example. You see, then, that it is possible even for our finite and very blind understandings (uninformed of a hundred millionth part of what is known to the great Disposer of all, looking at once into past, present, and to come), to fancy cases where the Disposer may lead, and yet be the author of no sin. If this be so, how much more may he lead, where the leading is for good, for safety, for protection!"

"Again, I would wish you to come to some practical illustration," said Tremaine.

"Suppose you take the story of Simonides we mentioned," observed Evelyn.

"I remember it beautifully told in Cicero." returned Tremaine. "I think he was employed to write a poem in praise of Scopas. He wrote, but only half his verses were in praise of Scopas; the other half eulogised Castor and Pollux. They were recited at supper, and Scopas gave the poet but half the sum agreed for, telling him, Castor and Pollux might pay him the rest. At that instant Simonides was called out of the room, by a message, as it was said, from two young men, who wanted him at the gate. No sooner had he left the company than the roof fell in, and crushed them all, and by this Providence was the poet paid. You surely, however, do not desire me to believe this nurse's tale. You might as well require me to believe that Castor and Pollux were really hatched from eggs by Leda, and that Jupiter really was their father, in the shape of a swan."

"I do not do this," said Evelyn, "yet I should not call the tale of Simonides foolish, if only taken as an illustration, which is what you ask for. That Simonides may stand for any good man, favoured by Heaven, is clear; that he might be called out of the room just before

the roof fell in, and so escape destruction, is equally possible: it is only suppressing the incident of the verses, and the jeering of Scopas, and changing the two demigods into two common persons, who may, however, be secretly moved by Heaven—and the story is complete, whether for Jew, Turk, or Christian. For my own part, thus changed, I am free to avow my belief in its possibility, and if possible, it is an answer to your triumphant question from Pope, 'whether Ætna shall forget to thunder, or gravitation cease, or some nodding ruin suspend its fall, till some good man has passed by, and a bad one comes within their range.' 'Tis in fact a complete answer to the difficulties, which you have certainly made the most of, drawn from what is called the 'Mechanical Hypothesis."

"At what have we arrived?" said Tremaine, after a pause.

"At Orleans," returned the Doctor, smiling at his own joke; and the boat ranging alongside the wharf, the two friends landed, and proceeded to the palace of the Bishop.

Tremaine was, however, anything but prepared for a visit. Every one of his opinions, or rather his doubts, upon the great subject that had occupied him, had received a shock, fraught with the most important consequences. All that he had ever relied upon as valid in his scepticism, had been made to totter, and new and heavenly light seemed to burst through the breaches that he felt had been effected in opinions which he had thought impregnable.

To do him justice, the prospect which this let into him was very sweet to his heart, and his natural reverence for the Deity enhanced in a tenfold degree the impression thus made. Piety seemed suddenly regenerated; and only proportionably stronger from the long suspension of it which his mind has sustained. He followed his friend, therefore, with a slow pace, and in silent musing, when, a stream of music of the most sacred character stole upon his ear, at first faint and dying in

the distance, but increasing in power even to grandeur as he approached it, in the very moment when his soul was most calculated by previous preparation to feel its influence. All this, however, must be accounted for in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A MASS.

What harmony is this, my good friends? Hark!
SHAKSPEARE.

EVERY one has heard the *Chaconne* of Jomelli; rich, solemn, flowing, majestic, yet full of sweetness. Music never had such a triumph in its power to kindle veneration. The soul is rapt in a sort of expectation of something preternatural, some impending mystery, some concealed wonder about to be unveiled. Yet it is felt differently, according to the ear and taste, the character and sensibility of the hearer. As these lead, so is the heart affected. A person of a religious heart in particular, is ready to admire, deprecate, or sympathise in all the fervour of pure and perfect devotion. Even Lady Gertrude, who had a fashionable ear, had felt these notes of grandeur "long drawn out:" but she only knew them as the music of the *Castle Spectre*. The name of Jomelli she had never heard, or forgotten it, if heard; and at any rate, though she felt something amounting to terror when it was performed in the theatre, it was only, or chiefly, because it was accompanied by a ghost.

Very different was the composition of Tremaine. He never heard the *Chaconne*, but his whole heart was arrested; he drank every note with all the mixed sympathies I have been describing, and spite of philosophy and scepticism itself, he felt as if something of sacredness had shed its influence over his soul, and made him dream of Heaven.

What was his surprise on entering the cloisters of the cathedral, which, as we have said, led to the Bishop's palace, to hear this identical composition, pealing through the aisles, more solemn and impressive than ever he had heard it before,—for it was accompanied by voices in full quire, of exquisite harmony, performing an anthem in honour of the attributes of God, and the course of his dealings with men. After this came the *Te Deum* of Graun,—which if any one ever heard or can hear without feeling his soul transported to the very gate of Heaven, I can only say, I envy not his composition.

'Twas the whole chapter, assisted by all the clergy, regular and secular of Orleans, celebrating a high mass on one of the highest days, and forming an union of two or three choirs together, with the addition of several female voices, remarkably sweet, and equally skilful.

The two friends stopped the moment their ears were thus greeted, and drawing near to a side door of the church, which opened into the cloister, kept in their breaths, and placed each his finger on his mouth, that he might not lose a note from the interruption of the other.

A chorister in a surplice passing that way into the chapel, civilly presented them with a copy of the anthem, which was extracted from the 50th Psalm, of which the following is a part in our English version :—

" The Lord, even the most mighty God hath spoken, and called the world from the rising up of the sun, to the going down of the same.

" Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence.

" Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High.

" And call upon me in the time of trouble; so will I hear thee, and thou shalt praise me."

The majestic solemnity of the music was admirably fitted to set off the imagery and sentiment of these words, in the heart of any one endowed with the commonest feeling either for music or religion. But after the late discussion, and with a mind teeming, as it were, with these very sentiments; impressed also, as I have observed,

anew, after years of sad apostacy, with their force and beauty;—Tremaine was particularly moved. He felt that every note had a peculiar power over his heart, as it rolled off the organ, and, with the accompanying voices, filled the vast concave of the church, and the "high embowed roof" of the cloister.

But when the voices returned at intervals to the verse which formed the burden to the anthem, set to the passages which may emphatically be denominated the *Chaconne*, the power of the music was at its height, and thrilled his very soul.

The verse was—

"And thou thoughtest, wickedly, that I am such an one as thyself, but I will reprove thee, and set before thee the things that thou hast done. Consider this, ye that forget God."

The crowd of spectators that thronged the church—the body of which was filled with the population of Orleans, all of them seemingly moved, some of them with wonder, some with hope, some with dismay, many to tears—added potently to the charm of the scene.

Had Tremaine been Bolingbroke himself, he could not have been insensible: for even of Bolingbroke it is recorded, that he was once so much moved by the celebration of the Host at Paris, as to exclaim, after some minutes musing, "If I were King of France, I would suffer no one to perform this but myself."

How then was it with Tremaine? His prejudices beaten down, his reason much convinced, his objections removed, or in a way to be so, with a soul originally pious, and at any rate, of the keenest sensibility, he seemed fixed in admiration; his eyes and ears were overpowered, his countenance beamed, he breathed quick, and his flesh seemed to creep.

He was not unobserved by his friend, who measured his impressions by his own, till the observation of him (with so many reasons for it), became much the more absorbing interest of the two. The music was almost forgotten in the contemplation of its effects.

In fact, full of hopes from the conversations that had

just passed, and the candid admissions of Tremaine, Evelyn could not help watching the impressions of this imposing service upon him with peculiar interest, as the most unerring index that could be afforded of his real state of mind.

But when, the anthem over, a prayer and thanksgiving ensued, which required all present to kneel, and he beheld him the first to bend in that attitude, and saw that he was not merely moved by example, or a wish to comply with the habits of the place, he hailed this silent promise of a future conversion with a joy which he had some difficulty in keeping concealed. It spoke everything he could wish, and more than Tremaine himself in words could have confessed.

It was not that a man of Evelyn's discrimination could be content with what might, he knew, prove a mere temporary ebullition, the consequence of a warm imagination, operated upon by a sudden and imposing scene, and excited to almost passion, by the charms of music. No! he saw the realisation of his hope (conceived from many passages of the arguments themselves most relied upon by Tremaine in defending his scepticism), that this scepticism was solely of the head, while genuine religion and natural piety had at least originally possessed his heart.

And so they had—for in them had he been nursed, with them had he been happy, and for them, after they had abandoned him, had he often and ardently sighed.

This also must explain to the reader what otherwise would promise but little real satisfaction, in the prospect which is now attending Tremaine. For had he been a determined, rugged infidel, unimbued from the beginning with any religious feeling; had he even ever arrived at that wicked hardihood in scepticism which corrupts the heart as well as the understanding, it would be trifling with common sense, and inexcusable in us as biographers, to attempt to persuade the world that this was a fair or reasonable conversion. No performance of the most exquisite sacred service could ever have moved him, even engrafted as it was on a two days' argument; and though that argument might have convinced his

reason, nothing, in fact, could have removed prejudices so inveterate.

But it must be remembered that his natural bias had been the other way: that it was his understanding only, not his heart, that had been perverted, and that from the beginning he never had been able to escape into absolute disbelief, though his refinements in reason, as well as everything else, had plunged him into doubts, from which he had in vain tried to extricate himself by his own powers. It must be remembered, also, that for more than twelve months *he had himself been laying the train for all that Evelyn had been enabled so forcibly to impress upon him*, and that if he had not succeeded in convincing himself, he had often gone far towards it, and was familiar with the arguments which *were* to convince him. He combated these arguments, indeed, with all the force he was master of, but it was in order the better to be satisfied with their confutation, where he allowed they were confuted. When, therefore, he landed with Evelyn from his boat, and walked with him to the cloisters, where their progress had been thus unexpectedly and pleasingly interrupted, he was already a proselyte, and more than half prepared for that impression which a superstitious person might have traced to the immediate finger of God.

But Evelyn was not superstitious, and if he hailed the emotions of Tremaine as a proof that his mind was returning from error to the right path, it was not because he thought any ceremony, however solemn, could effect this, but because all that had been passing for the last three days, added to all that had passed for the last twelve months, gave him the fairest hopes that all was right, or in a way to be so. We may guess, therefore, with what pleasure, when the service was over, he took his arm and entered the bishop's garden, which divided the cathedral from the palace.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

JOUR DE FETE.

> Frame your mind to mirth and merriment,
> Which bars a thousand harms, and lengthens life.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

"It has been good for us to have been here," said Evelyn, "even though amidst the errors of popery. I, at least, never heard this sublime music so impressively performed."

"'Tis an impression," observed Tremaine, after some moments' musing, "that will not easily wear out. The sounds seem still to float in the air, and I could wish not to part with them so soon."

At that instant a domestic, whom they had desired to announce their visit, returned with a message from *Monseigneur*, that he was not yet disengaged from the occupations of the church, but hoped to see them later.

"I am not sorry for it," said Tremaine: "I was never so little disposed for a visit, and would much rather for a time continue where we are."

"I suppose that is in our power," observed Evelyn, mentioning their wish to the domestic.

"*Monseigneur* would be too happy at any time," replied the servant, "but to-day is a fête for the whole town, making no leave necessary;" and he pointed to an avenue into which the people of the place were entering in crowds.

The avenue was a long and broad walk of beautiful acacias, that led from a fountain in a gay parterre to one of the principal streets of the city, into which it opened by large massive iron gates, that were surmounted by the arms of the See, in burnished gilding. These gates on high days, such as the present, were thrown wide for *Messieurs et Mesdames* of Orleans to enter and take their recreation for a certain number of hours, and this

they were now doing in all the plenitude of liberty and enjoyment.

The *bons bourgeois* with their wives and daughters; artizans and grisettes in their best attire, and though old-fashioned as compared to Paris, with an air of smartness wholly unknown by the same rank in England; children with their *bonnes*, and be sure, what are never found wanting in France, lovers in plenty, who took to the side benches, or ran up and down a mount in the garden, according as the mood they were in prompted them. To none, who were of the least decency of appearance, was admission denied, and the two porters at the gates seemed never tired of returning the salutes of the numbers who flocked to enjoy the good prelate's garden in a holiday sun.

The gentry of the place, far from flying the happy throng, added to it with a glee almost equal to the wildest; and the whole scene had an appearance of busy active happiness, which must have pleased Diogenes or Heraclitus himself.

"This is a gay sight indeed," said Tremaine, "and one is happy to see so much happiness in our fellow-creatures. Yet, in the humour I am in, kindled by far other feelings, I could have wished to have had this broad walk and these fine acacias all to ourselves."

"We shall, at least," replied Evelyn, "have the consolation of observing one proof more, that man is not an unhappy being, I think I never saw greater hilarity."

"What a contrast to the cathedral," cried Tremaine, "yet I suppose some of these motes were there."

"All of them, I'll answer for it," said Evelyn; "but there was a sunbeam in the cathedral as well as here. I never saw a large congregation so attentive, or so impressed."

"Yet here," cried Tremaine, "all unbent, all forgetful."

"Perhaps not the last," observed Evelyn.

"Strange, at least, if it were so," said Tremaine, "so near as we seemed to a positive intercourse with Heaven;" and he again fell into musing, and led his friend to a more

retired part of the grounds, to which the *bourgeoisie* had not access.

"Depend upon it,' resumed Evelyn, "these good folks only enjoy themselves the more for the service of the morning. Their cheerfulness would not be so pure, if they thought it was not pleasing to that Heaven with which they have just had communication—a communication, too, which only raises cheerfulness. Never was there such a mistake as the supposition that religion makes a man sour: want of it may do so."

"My good friend," said Tremaine, "you probe too severely;" and his brow became overcast.

"My dear Tremaine," cried Evelyn, "I meant it not for you."

"Your observation, however," resumed Tremaine, "hits me, and the more so, because I believe it correct. Yes!" added he, after some further deliberation, "I allow my happiness, nay even my temper, has been often much affected by the wreck I sustained of all those treasures which you have preserved—not only preserved, but improved. Would I had been like you!"

"It is by no means yet too late," said Evelyn; and he spoke in a tone of the most consoling cheerfulness.

"That is the question," answered Tremaine. "It is too certain I basked in the world, till I was spoiled by it; and the doubts I allowed to beguile me becoming troublesome, I silenced them into conviction, on what I thought the easiest side, in order that they might not interfere with other pursuits. I was even not alarmed to think them prejudices, provided they settled into certainty."

"A certainty," interrupted Evelyn, "which, I will venture to say, you never credited."

"I now think not," proceeded Tremaine. "It is at least evident to my own heart, that, however strongly I may have laid before you the arguments that so much shook me, I mentally gave you every assistance, from feeling and wishes, which you yourself could desire, in enforcing the powerful answers you have given to my doubts."

"Have they been powerful?" asked Evelyn, with interest.

"Most of them, ultimately, I hope, to conviction," answered Tremaine; "all of them weighty enough to have staggered me where I thought myself strongest."

"I hail this confession with the truest joy," replied Evelyn, "nor would I have it for the present either more ample or mere decisive."

"You are right, my friend," observed Tremaine. "The opinions of almost twenty years, although never well settled, never entirely rooted, cannot be torn from their hold in a moment. But all is loosened, bowed, and bending; and though the prospect is yet somewhat obscure, somewhat confused, the shadows that flitted round me are visibly retiring, and I believe as well as hope, that ere long a fair morning will arise and let in the day."

"This is beyond my expectation," said Evelyn, "nay, almost beyond my hope; and I shall ever love these towers, these gardens, this river, in short, this whole venerable and classical ground; but above all, that interesting, though deserted, St. Jules, that caused our extraordinary meeting, and restored my friend to himself."

"Something, however, yet remains to be done, and that by no means the smallest in importance or difficulty," said Tremaine.

"I fear nothing," cried the Doctor, "after having conquered a hydra."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

FUTURE STATE.

I had a thing to say—but let it go;
The sun is in the Heaven, and the proud day,
Attended with the pleasures of the world,
Is all too wanton and too full of gauds,
To give me audience.

SHAKSPEARE.

The gardens of the episcopal palace at Orleans are large and umbrageous, and the merry throng that had been let in from the town being confined to a particular enclosure, there was yet space enough elsewhere for even the thoughtful and serious mood of Tremaine to indulge itself without interruption. He was quite alive to Evelyn's observation on the cheerfulness of religion; and the scene he witnessed would have convinced a spleen darker than his, that there might be a great deal of happiness in the world, if the world knew how to enjoy it. If he avoided this scene, therefore, and sought out a more secluded part of the garden, it was not from gloom of mind, but to give loose to those higher thoughts which the last important hours had generated.

There was a retired grove of limes on the other side of the ground, between which, and the moving scene under the acacias, the whole of the buildings, called the Palace, intervened. Into this he hurried Evelyn by the arm—who, at any other time, would, perhaps, have resisted, for the sake of his favourite contemplation of a holiday, sincerely enjoyed by those to whom a holiday was valuable. But, on this occasion, Tremaine was commandant for the day: for it is not easy to describe the hope, and consequent pleasure, that had begun to expand his friend's mind on the subject between them,

And yet, reader, I dread another argument, for you

as well for as myself; and nothing but the task I have undertaken, and the end I have propounded in setting these notices to paper, could make me go on.

At any rate, you may read or not, as you please. But if you do please, my love for Tremaine and my respect for Evelyn, tell me, your pains will not be thrown away.

"What you say," said Tremaine, as they entered the grove above mentioned, "is very true: you cannot give up your visit as you have announced it; but as you did not tell the Bishop I was with you, you may leave me here, and I promise you my thoughts will have full employment till you return."

"*Felix faustaque sit*," said Evelyn taking his leave, and following the servant, who had been sent to announce that the prelate was at leisure, and hoped to see him.

Tremaine almost rejoiced to be alone, so tumultuous and scattered were his ideas, and so necessary was it to marshal them into some sort of order, before he could say to himself what opinions he had really come to, what conclusions were true, what doubtful, what to be entirely rejected. That new lights seemed to have broken in upon him, or rather that the long thickening darkness which had obscured original light had been pierced and penetrated, so as to be in a fair way of being dispelled, was a discovery which even his habitual prejudices could not disguise, and he hailed it with pleasure. Still, that a full conviction illuminated him, could not be said; and it was with pain that he still smote his breast, as with a hurried step he coursed the walk, or threw himself on one of the seats, imploring (for he now actually implored it of the Almighty,), that he might be still farther enlightened.

He had been already on his knees in the cathedral; though that, in some little measure, had been from sympathy. He now, from sheer, prone, and confiding hope, felt disposed to resume that attitude, and address himself to Heaven for assistance.

And this he actually did! believe who may, and tell it

who will in the world of politics or fashion, where he had once blazed in a light and colouring so very, very different!

There was a recess, forming a sort of labyrinth in the side of the walk, composed in the old fashion of hornbeam and clipt yew, so thick and retired as to be impervious to the eye, and almost to the sun itself, though glowing at that moment. Into this he retreated; nor are we ashamed to relate, that on his knees, and in all sincerity and fervour of heart, he prayed for knowledge, and, perhaps, without knowing it, for grace itself.

It is seldom such prayers are unavailing. It is at least only where the heart is hardened to the core, that the supplicant, like the murder-soiled king, in Hamlet, is obliged to confess,

> My words fly up, my thoughts remain below,
> Words without thoughts never to Heav'n can go.

The heart of Tremaine was, indeed, something relieved by this act of devotion, but he felt not yet the reward which generally attends it, nor was it with lightness of spirit that he returned to the walk which continued to be abandoned to him by all the world. For all the world was still flocking to the holiday-making on the other side of the garden, though the heat was so oppressive from a sultry sun, now above an hour beyond its meridian, that not a breath of air could be felt to fan a leaf; the very birds slunk in distress to their darkest covert; and all seemed the palace of silence, save where a suppressed note or two now and then showed that life and animation were not absolutely extinct.

Tremaine, in his then frame of mind, required this absolute stillness, to which he gave himself up without reserve;—forming a remarkable contrast, could any one have seen it, to the gay multitude within a furlong of his retirement.

But his thoughts were by no means yet satisfactory. Nothing can be more true than what he had himself so recently observed to Evelyn, that the opinions of twenty years, though never well settled, never entirely rooted,

could not be torn from their hold in a moment. It was a great point indeed gained, to have so won upon his prejudices upon the great subject, as to have deprived them of their wonted power; witness the act of devotion in which he had just indulged. But prayer for direction here did not with him imply a life to come; which had always proved his most unhappy doubt, and upon which, however long, and even satisfactory, the recent argument upon Providence, nothing in point of fact had been yet attempted. We must not, therefore, be surprised if his difficulties—his cruel difficulties upon this part of the subject, still floated through his brain, nay, were almost encouraged to present themselves to his recollection; as if his mind, astonished at the change it had experienced, was fearful that it had been taken by surprise, and not fairly dealt by, and had therefore become wary and suspicious of what seemed too great a benefit to be so suddenly conferred. A sort of reaction was thus generated in favour of those his old tenets, which, at least, had not yet been discussed. Nor is this, spite of his pleasure in the prospect of the complete recovery he had hoped, either new or wonderful in the human mind. After a violent storm though a calm succeed, and all is fair, the undulation of the subsiding waves will continue for some time on the surface.

Thus it was with Tremaine, who, though almost satisfied upon Providence, was by no means out of doubt as to an hereafter; and who, as has been observed, from the very surprise at the change he felt upon other points, was the more jealous to receive satisfaction on this.

"That all and everything is and must be within the Power of the All-knowing and All-supreme, cannot be denied," said he to his own mind; "that there may be, and perhaps is another state, nay, innumerable other states and other beings, is no more than likely; that metaphysics may prove, as far as such dark, uncertain, and, at best, probable conjectures can prove, that our souls are immortal, cannot fairly be denied. But is this, after all, more than very refined *guesses*, upon which many fine, perhaps unanswerable things may be said,

without any absolute satisfaction remaining behind? How many things are there which we cannot answer, yet do not believe? The birds and beasts of the field perish, and do not, cannot live again. In what are we so much, so very much better than they, that we alone are to think ourselves immortal? In how many things have we only a common nature with them? Our frame, constitution, life, mechanism, and the means by which all are created, supported, and destroyed; even the immateriality, and therefore it should seem the immortality of our souls, (if they are immortal)—all, all, even our reason, are the same with theirs, allowing merely for diversity of figure, faculty, and degree. And what is there in this reason, this boasted characteristic difference, to make us presume ourselves so infinitely more favoured, that while they perish we cannot die? 'Tis true, my friend has demonstrated a providence, an inspection, a government by the Most High, to assist our most imperfect and dangerous reason; and thanks to Heaven, and him its instrument, I think I may say I am upon this satisfied, where I had once despaired of satisfaction. Religion, therefore, as far as this goes, has returned (and sweetly) to my heart. But to live again, to be called to account hereafter, to be judged in a future state for all we have done in this; in short, the joys of heaven, or the punishment of hell;—where, from natural religion at least, where is the proof?"

The pain of renewed doubt here got the better of him; nor can we wonder; for could our natural lights alone satisfy even the most pious upon this most cruel point of interest, who, even without the Gospel, would be an infidel?

"No one," continued Tremaine in his soliloquy, "no one has yet returned from the other world to assure us of its existence, or if it exists, which probably it does, that it does so for us. Here we *see* that all is mortal. To-day animated, to-morrow a clod; to-day sparkling, to-morrow crumbled. Such is that poor bird"—and he looked at a dead linnet which had been left in the walk. "Yet but a few hours, and it sang; had a heart. and it breathed: a

mate, and it loved; motion, and it flew; it was capable of happiness, and happy—and now no more. Is this other than our own history? beginning in joy, continuing in action, ending in oblivion. In what, then, are we different from the linnet? or because *we* are directed by reason, *he* by instinct, even though Providence govern both, why is death oblivious to him and not to me?".

These were sad reflections, and coming in the train of such happier feelings as had begun to possess him, they astonished even himself, and filled him with dismay. It was therefore not without unusual pleasure, and a sensation of relief, that, after a few minutes more of musing, not at all satisfactory, he beheld the return of Evelyn from his visit, and immediately joined him.

Upon being apprised of this revulsion as it were in the mind of his friend, the Doctor, a little uneasy, questioned him as to the state of his opinions on the great points they had already discussed.

"They are where they were," said Tremaine, "when you left me; that is, there is an approximation between us not more pleasing than unexpected. But although I allow my prejudices as to the government of the world by Providence, as to all the metaphysical arguments on the nature of matter and spirit, and above all as to your great argument from innate feeling, are much beaten down, if I may not say they are removed; although, too, I can say with confidence, my feelings are all newly and strongly awakened on the side you would wish, instead of being blunted and deadened as for years they were; still the belief of all we have discussed does not seem incompatible with the disbelief of a future state, and the proof of that state seems as much as ever wanting."

"I thought, said Evelyn, anxiously, "we had yesterday settled, that for us to be such machines as you had supposed, was absolutely impossible."

"You argued it admirably," replied Tremaine, "and most certainly proved to me that materialism was an absurdity. You also showed how presumable it was, that to be spiritual was to be immortal. But even you allowed that this depended upon the will of Heaven; and

your whole argument, as I observed to you, applied to brute and beast, as well as to man. That they, too, are to live again, that any scheme of the Almighty in creating the universe is to embrace *them* in any other part of it, you will scarcely contend; and the step is but a short one from them to us. Whatever our place in the general order of things, whatever the end and object of our being (questions for ever inextricable to human intellect), why are we to suppose that we alone, of all sublunary creatures, are not to continue sublunary, or obey the general lot of destruction? 'Tis true we have reason; but does that do more than elevate us a little in the scale....."

"A little in the scale!" interrupted Evelyn.

"Hear me," said Tremaine, "be assured you will find me a willing listener in return."

The Doctor was silent.

"Does reason then do more for us," continued Tremaine, "then raise us a little in the scale;—enabling us as it does, inferior in many things, to obtain the mastery of all: to move the mountain, clear the forest, and tame or expel its inhabitants, nay, enlist many of them on our side; in short, to resist the elements, and almost direct the storm? That we are kings of the world (and I agree with you under the guidance of Heaven) is a demonstrated fact; but will this take us beyond the boundary of our kingdom, where all our actions are confined, and to which we are, for anything that appears, as much chained as any of our subjects, animate or inanimate? I ask you to complete the great, the benevolent work you have begun, and give me your proof that my fears are unfounded."

"Easily could I do this," returned Evelyn, "if you will only give the argument fair play, nor expect more than the nature of the subject permits."

"Be assured I will not," said Tremaine: "but to what limits do you confine me?"

"To feeling and common sense," replied the Doctor; "I want no more."

"Agreed," cried Tremaine.

"You will promise, then," continued Evelyn, "that in this, as in the argument on Providence, you will not demand proof of which the subject is not even susceptible; that you will not expect geometrical demonstration of what can be no object of geometry."

"I will," said Tremaine. "On the other hand, you will not expect me to be swayed by simple conjecture, or admit as demonstrated what may be merely a speculation."

"This is, at least, not my design," said Evelyn; "and yet where all we see proves only that there is, and must be, infinitely *more* than we see, who can sit down content to go no farther?"

"I know not your exact meaning," observed Tremaine.

"That the world should have had a beginning—that is, that there should have been a time when it was not—implies that there was some design in its creation, beyond merely that it should exist in the manner it does, and then be destroyed. For otherwise we approach the impiety of supposing the All-wise to have bestowed his pains and attention in vain, or, at best, to amuse the space of a moment—if we can venture so to talk as to suppose amusement an object with such a Being. The child raises his house of cards for the pleasure of knocking it down again, or he employs himself in making toys which for the time interest him, but, as soon as made, interest him no longer. Can we, dare we impute such conduct to the Deity? Yet such is our supposition, if we believe there is no final cause for our existence beyond what we see. This cause it wholly goes beyond our unassisted faculties even to guess at. It surpasses reason, or even imagination. But of this we may be sure—that *some end* there is for our being here, as well as for all other animals, all the vegetable productions, and even for stocks and stones. Can we think that all other kinds were made for human kind? If so, why a lion? why a monkey? Yet I own I am baffled whenever I think of a lion or a monkey. They have clearly no connection with man, and must have some purpose of their own, that caused their creation.

"Reasoning as well as we can from the objects of man

to the objects of his Maker, (which, at best, is most imperfectly,) we should say that it is not a usual object for which to erect a stupendous or elaborate work, merely that it should exist, without any farther end. The question has often been asked, What is the final end of the creation? Different answers have been given. The glory of the creator has been the general one. I own I never understood this; and the answerer has, I think, been fairly asked, Is God then proud?—The happiness of the creation is a better answer. But, alas! this is broken in upon with so many cruel instances of the reverse of happiness, that unless there is something farther, at best the account is doubtful. A third is, that we belong to a system, and that man and all other animals have their place in it. This is your famous Bolingbroke. Does this inform, still less does it satisfy us one whit the more? Does it give us any knowledge of our end or aim, of the nature of the system we are placed in, and for what purpose placed—particularly if all is to end here, and we are born only to die? Yet this is your argument: and you not unfairly refer me to the meaner animals, who seem so born, and ask why theirs may not be our fate? or if they appear, as they do, of too little consequence to live again, whether the difference between us and them, because we have speech and reason, with ten thousand crimes and corruptions which they have not, is so great, that we are to be translated to some other part of the system—they not?"

"This, I grant you, is fairly asked. Nothing can be fairer than your statement," said Tremaine.

"My answer is," observed Evelyn, "that, whatever the object of the creation of meaner animals, it seems fulfilled here, without going farther. *They have no responsibility*, and from this circumstance alone, it should seem that futurity to them is shut out. If the sort of happiness, therefore, which they seem to enjoy, is the end of their existence, they have it, and the end is accomplished. But not so with man."

"And why not?"

"We have so much more, and so much less, than we

want," replied Evelyn. "Futurity lies open before us, could we but open our eyes to look at it; and though Bolingbroke rave ever so much against the ravings of those who disagree with him, the whole human world will never (because they cannot) desist from endeavouring to make out the prospect."

"Has any one succeeded?" asked Tremaine.

"I know not," said Evelyn, "nor is it vital to the argument that I should. It is sufficient that what I observed is true; the world is never satisfied but in the attempt. Baffled, thwarted, disappointed, mortified,—no one desists; and though the prospect may never have been distinctly seen, and the road never completely opened, yet all that ever were born, and almost as soon as born, take for granted that there is this prospect, and rush into the road which they think must lead to it, in the same manner as birds try their wings, or hunting dogs their scent, from instinct alone.

"I ask why this should be? for I presume you do not dispute the fact."

"Perhaps not," said Tremaine.

"Then, why this fact? why this disposition, 'never ending, still beginning,' throughout the universe of human nature, if all these pains, this restlessness, this conviction of something to come, though we may not discover it, be implanted in us for nothing?"

"But why not discover it?" said Tremaine.

"That is not for me to tell," replied Evelyn, "being a mystery of the creation, which, like a million of other mysteries, it is not given us to unravel. Thus, then, contenting myself with the *fact*, it is not unreasonable to presume it may be one of the very plans of our nature, that we should only feel convinced there *is* this futurity, without being allowed sensibly to behold it. Now, as mere clods of earth, this notion or feeling is too much; while, to think it *only* notion or feeling, and that we are never to enjoy it, is too little.

"This, then, is one, though only one, of many important differences between us and the brute creation, —from which your fears will not permit you to dis-

tinguish us. You allow, indeed, that reason is a characteristic distinction, but only as the claws of a lion are characteristic of a distinction of species; and the utmost benefit of this reason is, according to you, to enable us to enslave the rest of the world. I had hoped there were more things, even upon this earth, much more in *Heaven* and earth, ' than are dreamt of in your philosophy.' "

" Willingly would I hear the proof of them," said Tremaine.

" This very conversation proves them," answered Evelyn.

" I know your meaning," cried Tremaine, " and see all to which this concentrated observation leads."

" No man better, I will answer for it," observed Evelyn.

" You would tell me," continued Tremaine, " that to be able to discuss this very question of a future state; to have those aspirations after it which many of us have; to contemplate a Creator in his works, and, above all, even to *attempt* to unveil the final purpose of the creation, though we fail,—proves there is something beyond the present, to be known only hereafter."

" You perceive my meaning exactly," observed Evelyn; " and I would ask why man is not only endowed with this, when no other animal so much as dreams of it, but is also so restless, so persevering, so intent upon it, from his cradle to his grave (and only the more intent as he approaches that grave), if this were a mere philosophical speculation, like the solar system, electricity, or the philosopher's stone? It has been forcibly said by the religious poet,

" Who *wishes* God immortal, *proves* it too.

" This is no more than sound argument. The very wish, above all, being so universal in man, yet extending to no other creature, proves the whole subject. Why? Because it is the voice of nature—a voice that never yet was raised in vain.

" The approach of death appals, the hope of immor-

tality kindles, no animal but man. The ox grazes to the last,—placid, happy, and ignorant; the lark sings to the moment when she is hawked; even the very hare, when unpursued, though the hounds may be abroad, frisks and gambols in her covert. Till the last blow is struck, not these, but the whole of animal life, when not actually threatened, is free from the evil, the misery of apprehension. But we, although the sword sleep, and a Trajan reign, nay, even frolic with youth and health, *we* can never deliver ourselves from the fear, not so much of death, as what is to follow after. And *why* this, if nothing *is* to follow?

"Upon this simple question, these three or four little words, 'Why, if nothing is to follow,' I would almost rest the whole case. Search nature through; examine all instincts, all feelings, all propensities, all ends proposed, all means supplied, all objects, powers, faculties, impulses; the passions, the fears, the hopes, the ambition, the attachments of man, the incitements of brutes, the reasons for love, hate, joy, or anger. Examine all these, and then tell me whether there is not some fit end, for the benefit of the creature, or the general advantage of the world, in every one of them?

"I pause for your answer."

Tremaine allowed there could be no doubt of this.

"Then tell me, if you can, why this feeling, this restless curiosity as to something that is to follow death, this shrinking of the soul back on herself, this startling at destruction? I may add, in the same forcible and beautiful language,

> "This pleasing hope, this fond desire,
> This longing after immortality.

"Tell me, I say, why all this belongs to man alone, and not to bird, or beast, or insect?"

"It is a powerful question," allowed Tremaine, "and I have sometimes asked it myself."

"Have you ever answered it?" demanded Evelyn.

"I have not."

"Then be assured you could not, any more than

that on which it is founded,—'Does nature ever act in vain?' But, oh! mockery! pitiless, ruthless, worse than unjust, merciless, tyrannous mockery, if after all to be deceived! If the desire of future life is unquenchable, and if the fear of the uncertainty of our fate is, in itself, unbearable,—so that hope, sweet and ever springing, ever buoyant, can alone support the darkening soul against it,—what can we say to this injustice, this inconsistency in Him who is all justice, all consistency, to have reserved such a miserable illusion for one only being, and to place that being at the head of the creation! May I not again ask, in the language of the same religious poet,—

> "Is not this torment, in the mask of joy?

"And may I not add,

> "Oh for what crime, unmerciful Lorenzo,
> Destroys thy scheme the whole of human race?"

Tremaine, not a little moved, allowed, and he said with pleasure, that he could not answer these questions.

"Believe me," observed Evelyn, "they are deeply founded. They are the anchoring places of the mind in all her doubts. Other topics may, I allow, be urged with force, with eloquence, with impression, and may finish a conquest over a willing heart, already half won. But these must bend the most stubborn. They may be rejected, but cannot be answered. They require no rhetoric to set them off; and, as long as you allow man to be nobler and better than the brutes, so long must you say it would be gross cruelty as well as inconsistency in his Creator (which cannot be), to have made him, in the most essential point of all, so much their inferior."

"Perhaps I might allow this," said Tremaine.

"I thought you would," said Evelyn; "and having laid this ground, it no more than naturally prepares us for another, almost, though, I will allow, not quite so conclusive."

"What is that?" asked Tremaine.

"I mean that fond clinging of the soul, in its most afflicting moments, to a hope which has been always its efficacious, and almost its never-failing support, when support would otherwise be lost. I mean that hope of rejoining friends, parents, and children, all whom our hearts held dear, when God in his dispensation has deprived us of them here. Why in this are we made so differently from other animals? Why dread the losing them—why languish after them when lost—why confide in the thought of seeing them again,—if all be illusion? Without this thought, this hope, to which we cling with a constancy in many instances interminable, the loss of our favourites here would sometimes be beyond our strength."

"Is this the exact account, or do you hold it universal?" asked Tremaine. "Does it last longer than a time, and with time do not all of us recover?"

"I grant you we do," replied Evelyn; "nor would the lot of humanity be bearable, did not time shed balm and healing from his wings. But how recover? How are we healed? Is it more in many cases than to escape from the immediate paroxysm of grief, which, if it lasted long, would assuredly kill us? And, as it is, how many are there who actually, in secret, never do cease to wail the objects of their fondness, until their hearts waste and wither away, as it is supposed under other diseases? At best, we are long, long in recovering, and though competent to all the functions of life, may even never resume that lightness of spirit, that buoyant pleasure we enjoyed before. We have heard of nursing our grief, of even the luxury of woe, till, like the raving Constance, we call death amiable and lovely, and wish 'to ring our fingers in his household worms.' It is hence that, under these heavy afflictions, numbers have abstracted themselves from the world; and the walls of the Paraclete or the Chartreuse have witnessed many a sigh of anguish after those that are gone, which would not be exchanged for the gayest scenes the world could offer.

"Ask the faithful youth,
Why the cold urn of her whom long he loved

So often fills his arms, so often draws
His lonely footsteps, at the silent hour,
To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?
Oh! he will tell thee that the wealth of worlds
Should ne'er seduce his bosom to forego
That sacred hour."

Here Evelyn stopped, and both he and Tremaine seemed much affected. Soon the Doctor proceeded:

"And yet I grant you that I count not upon this argument as I do upon the other two—drawn from the fear of death as a gate to unknown terrors, or, at best, to some unknown farther existence, and from the hope of living again. The thought of rejoining friends may, with many, as you say, wear out with time; the hope of living again only increases."

"This is but candid," said Tremaine; "but yet is it not extraordinary that this hope, this longing, which I allow is universal enough to entitle itself to be called *natural*, should yet have nothing precise, nothing certain, attending it—that few can even give a reason for it, and that they can only say that it is? Did it imply the certainty of things so important, would not the *rationale* be more evident, and better understood?"

"Yet how many other things are there in nature, particularly in physics," answered Evelyn, "of the *rationale* of which we are utterly ignorant, though with the fact familiar? Magnetism for one. The needle points always to the Pole: why she points—what is the attraction—for what farther and greater purpose in the creation than to guide man across the deep—no one can say, but that there is a something existing at the Pole, to which the needle points, and between which and the needle there is some natural and necessary connection—who can for a moment doubt? Thus there is analogy; and analogy, as argument, you will not reject."

"Certainly not," said Tremaine.

"But our very imperfections here," continued Evelyn, "furnish another argument, equally irresistible in my mind. I set out with observing, we have so much more, and so much less than we want, if always to be

"Confined and pestered in this pinfold here.

"Let us again reason from analogy. A kind and considerate parent prepares for his son the education suitable for his intended occupation in life. Is there no choice in this education? Is the intended scholar sent to learn handicraft, or the mechanic, Hebrew? What should we say to a young man sent to college with trunks filled with the tools of a watchmaker, or any other art? What to a sailor, with a collection of law-books, instead of maps and charts? On the other hand, if the young man know not for what he is designed, except from his outfit; if the outfit consist of books, will he not say he was intended for study? if of weapons, for war? if of spades and axes, for labour?"

"This is easily granted," said Tremaine.

"Then why," continued Evelyn, "why make man, so formed for contemplation, and eminently for the contemplation of God, of Heaven, and a future state? Surely, if there is no future state, this is a most unnecessary part of our constitution! Surely we might be not merely as happy, but infinitely happier, without that insatiable, restless curiosity, in respect to a subject never to be understood, and after an object never to be attained! Why is this subject the most interesting, I had almost said the most distressing, though, at the same time, ever-during, of all that gives food for the inquiry of man? For all other subjects there is a reason. Arts, sciences, war, politics, agriculture, medicine, commerce;—all these exercise *our nature*, and all these may be more or less attained, as the beaver and the bee exercise *their nature* when they build huts, or gather honey. Why, then, the contemplation of the Godhead, and our relations with heaven, for us, and not for them? Reason, you will say, is necessary to admit it—reason, which they have not. But why should reason extend so far, if really for no result? The reason, too, you will observe, not of three or four persons only; of a sage here and there scattered in a century, as gems and ornaments on the bosom of time; but the reason of every man, however simple, however uneducated, that ever was born since time began.

"If you answer, it is merely the result of the thinking faculty, which cannot be controlled—I deny the impossibility of controlling in him who created it. If you say it is at best a gratuitous curiosity, I say that curiosity was never gratuitous, but always proposed utility for its end. Here, however, where there is no result, there can be no utility, and the whole being frustrated, is worse than useless. We have too much knowledge to be quiet, too little to be satisfied. Thus, the brute with his instinct is infinitely more perfect than man with his reason; infinitely happier, because never deceived; infinitely more independent, because without religion."

"Without religion!!"

"Yes! You are surprised, but this is no paradox. For why should man be religious, how, indeed, can he be so, if all end here? Only to know enough of God, to long to know more; only to think he exists, yet not for us; to feel responsible for right or wrong, yet nowhere to be called to account; to love God, to wish to please him, to feel always acting in his sight, yet never to know whether he accepts our love, whether we succeed in pleasing him, or he approve or disapprove our actions! This! this is, indeed, paradox. Who could sustain for a year, a month, a day, much less a whole life, such tasteless effort, such heartless exertion, such gratuitous slavery? Now what answer does the flimsy Bolingbroke (excuse me for being so irreverent) tell you to give to all this? Why, that we have no business with it at all, still less with God, whom we were never intended to know. I allude to his lines (for they are his)—

> "Know then thyself, *presume not God to scan*,
> The proper study of mankind is man.

"If this is more than mere jingle, I never yet detected emptiness under a pompous outside. As if man, with all these dispositions, these powers of contemplating futurity, these unrepressed and irrepressible impulses to know his Maker, which no other animal has, in order the better to act up to the intention of his Being, could possibly study himself, without studying that Maker at

the same time! Now, what should we think of a man, who, being called upon to study, much more to expound a law, gravely tells you, that you are not to inquire who was the law-giver, or what his intention. Yet such is this famous maxim. A child would be ashamed of the assertion, though the philosophical fop who made it, no doubt, thought it an oracle. You see I attribute it to its true author, not to poor Pope, who was gulled by him, and frightened out of his wits, when he came to learn what he had really vended as true philosophy; like Fear striking the chords of the lyre, and scared

E'en at the sound himself had made.

No! no! This is not, cannot be the scheme of an all-wise Creator, who never gave an *incitement to action, without a proportionate end.* It were to contradict his own wise purpose to give this knowledge of himself, and give no more."

Observing the Doctor to pause, Tremaine said he felt all this, if it could not be done away, to be most important, and entreated him to go on.

"Sensibly, therefore, it has been asked," pursued Evelyn, "why man alone should be condemned to the universal torture of fearing death, unless there was some important object to be fulfilled by it? Now that object is evidently, by convincing us that there is something to come, to force us to set a guard over our conduct before it arrives. I have said, that if there is no future state, the beasts with their instinct are more perfect than man. Surely it is more perfect to have a visible object, visibly answered, and there an end, than both to have the object obscure, and not know whether it be answered or not. If all finish in the grave, I repeat, we should be more perfect if our inquiries and curiosity never went beyond it."

The Doctor pausing here, Tremaine allowed that he had put these arguments so forcibly, that it would be difficult to overcome them. "Nevertheless," added he, "there is an answer, of the soundness of which I am, indeed, not perfectly sure, but which I should be glad to hear refuted."

"Your answer," said Evelyn.

"Simply this: It is most true that, from the hope and fear as to futurity which the idea of death always inspires, it may be presumable, and many may feel convinced, that that futurity must be. But you say, it is because no *end* can have been proposed in the infusion of such hope and and fear, unless one or other be realised."

"I do."

"Now may not there be *this* end, even in *this* world, without the reality of a world to come? Hope is in itself a positive good, even though never realised!"

"Admitted."

"Is not Hope, then, part of the constitution of our nature? Is it not our every-day's practice to engage in the most difficult pursuits, to encounter the most menacing dangers, to persevere under the most oppressive toil, supported only by this sweet and powerful instigator, sometimes even happy in her delicious illusions, and yet fail at last in every object that kindled our exertion?"

"I grant all this," said Evelyn.

"Were I to come to particular cases," continued Tremaine, "what voyages have been undertaken, and hardships voluntarily suffered, with no other incentive but hope? All has been frustrated; and yet during the action, the hope of succeeding has kept every thing right, every thing well; and the passion itself must be considered as a positive good, perhaps as great as the failure in the end was a misfortune."

"This may also be true," said Evelyn.

"Why, then," pursued Tremaine, "may not this hope of an hereafter, *even though there be no such thing*, be a mean, ordained by the Almighty, to incite us to good in this our earthly pilgrimage, though, as in the voyages I have supposed, the thing expected fail in the end? Thus, then, the *positive* good which you admit this hope to be while it lasts, is a complete answer to your question founded on our clinging to it in the agony occasioned by the loss of those dear to us. It assuages that agony, and renders it supportable until time finish the cure. But, as applicable to our general subject, there is even a marked

and favourable difference in the hope we are discussing, from that in the every-day business of the world, to which I have compared it; namely, that in the first, none of the disappointments on which you have so much rested, supposing it to fail—that is, supposing there to be no hereafter—can possibly be experienced."

"I understand you," said Evelyn; "you mean to say, that death having occasioned a total insensibility and oblivion, the truth or falsehood of the expectation fostered can never be determined."

"That is my exact meaning," observed Tremaine.

"Your very question overthrows your whole argument," replied Evelyn.

"How?"

"Because you bring the whole into positive doubt; and positively to doubt, is to cloud the whole prospect; it is in itself a practical disappointment."

"I see not this," said Tremaine, "since to doubt is merely not to feel sure, and hope itself would not be hope, were the thing hoped for an absolute certainty."

"This, as a general proposition," said Evelyn, "is true. But you have assumed as at least likely, all that makes for you on the other side. For your answer supposes (or it is no answer at all), that to give this hope *without gratifying it*, is a part of the scheme of the government of the world by the Creator."

"I put it as a mere question," observed Tremaine, "not whether it is, but whether it *may* not be so?"

"I so understand you," said Evelyn, "and I reply, that to suppose even that it *may be* so, does away the incitement to good on which you have rested."

"I wish for more light on this," said Tremaine.

"Why, what should we say," answered Evelyn, "to the case of a body of adventurers, encouraged by their Prince to undertake some important expedition, some colony, or voyage, in the strong hope held out to them of reaping honours, riches, and happiness. The Prince has at least never been *known* to break his word to his subjects, or *wilfully* to mislead them with false hopes."

"What then?" asked Tremaine.

"On a sudden a panic breaks out among them; either from some emissary, or their own natural, but unaccountable feelings. *Suspicions arise of the honest intentions of their Prince;* they believe, with no other proof than that it is barely *possible*, and that they cannot *prove* the negative to a demonstration, that their sovereign, hitherto so good and sincere, *may be* cheating them with a false account of this expedition, which in reality *may be* undertaken for no purpose, possibly a bad purpose, or at best to keep them peaceable for a time, and then get rid of them. I ask, what becomes of that blessing of hope which first prompted them to undertake the adventure?"

"It is poisoned," said Tremaine. "But yet if the Prince permit these suspicions . . . . ."

"That is not the question," interrupted Evelyn. "I only ask as to the state of the hope as an excitement to action? Is it even compatible with the existence of this suspicion, or the suspicion with the continuance of the hope?"

"Go on," said Tremaine.

"But what shall we say of the Prince himself,—especially if he be such as I have described him, benevolent, just, and sincere, and particularly studious of the interests of his subjects,—should he really intend to deceive them into good behaviour by promises he never meant to perform;—content in thinking their fate will overtake them before they can either discover or suffer from the deceit?"

"How can this be?" said Tremaine.

"Suppose some such case as this," answered Evelyn. "In order to secure quiet and happiness among his people, and trusting to their opinion of his fidelity to his promises, he holds out to all who have deserved well to a certain age, that they shall be conveyed to some happy place in another part of his dominions, there to pass the rest of their lives in perfect prosperity. They trust him, and set out, and are led by him, or his officers, to some Upas tree, where death, without even the apprehension of it, overtakes them; or to some water of Lethe, where thinking pleasantly to slake their thirst, they fall into an oblivion of all that is past, and die in either case without

discovering the cheat. We will suppose, too, that no one else discovers it; will that latter circumstance excuse the Prince, or make it one whit the more reconcilable to the character of a fair-dealing ruler, which I have fancied for him? Is it most likely, even with the good end he had in view, that such a Prince should pursue it in this disingenuous and crafty manner; or that he should propound some other less complicated and more consistent mode of accomplishing his point?"

"Certainly, the last is the most likely," said Tremaine.

"Would you, then, if the question were put to you, (and always supposing the character of the Prince to be what I have represented it), decide for the first, merely because it was within a possibility of being true, that is, because the negative or impossibility of it could not be demonstrated?"

"I should not," said Tremaine.

"Yet this is the case you have supposed," observed Evelyn. "You are even *astute* in evading the consequences of the argument we began with. Now, as a logician, I do not say that astuteness may not, on some occasions, be fair."

Tremaine, smiling at his eagerness, asked him to explain.

"Why, where a thing is well made out, and proved to all satisfactory conviction,, should anything *apparently* inconsistent with it be started, the utmost ingenuity (by which I mean remote conjecture and fancy), are no more than fair to get rid of it. But here the astuteness is yours, against the whole weight of your preceding arguments, against all analogy, nay, against all that you have yourself allowed to be the probable truth. In shorter language, what you do not, cannot, and wish not to resist, you would escape from, because of the impossibility of proving absolutely the negative of a possibility, however improbable. I do not mean to say, that because hope exists, it *must* therefore be realised, but existing as the *designed* incentive to good conduct, the *suspicion* that it is to be disappointed, does away the design. To

suppose it, therefore, a stimulus, yet take the stimulus away, is to suppose a contradiction."

"There is much in this," said Tremaine.

"But if this is so as to *hope*," added the Doctor, "what will you say to *fear?* That, at least, though it may be groundless, is not a positive good."

"It is a positive evil," said Tremaine; "yet, supposing my conjecture probable, it also may be a mean of moral government, by deterring men from vice, although groundless in the end."

"The possibility of which, the moment you broach, and can win believers to your side, that moment you do away its terrors. My dear Tremaine, this is but sad wild work, and surely unworthy the character of argument. I should be glad to know the force of that man's virtue, that is kept in order by a fear, which he thinks, or is told, is only inculcated as an inducement to that order, but that as to its reality, he is safe."

"What, if I give this matter up?" said Tremaine, "satisfied that the preponderance at least of the evidence, both as to hope and fear, is with you."

"We may then proceed from the point where we left off," said Evelyn, gladly; "which was, that these two master passions, applied as they are to induce the belief of a future state, are the best proofs that nature has given us of the existence of that state, and that if this is not true, the beasts of the field are better off than we. One, and only one supposition, can explain this otherwise."

Tremaine eagerly asked what that was?

"It is," said Evelyn, "that the Almighty regularly and visibly takes upon him to govern man in his conduct here upon this earth, in the same manner as, for a time, he governed the Jews of old. That is, that he calls us to account in our present life, judges of our actions to our faces, and rewards or punishes, as the civil magistrate rewards and punishes.

"Whether or not he does this, is what I need not ask of you."

"Certainly not," said Tremaine.

"In this the most orthodox will agree with you," replied Evelyn: "for,

> "Fallen is thy throne, O Israel!
> The fire from Heaven that led thee
> Now lights thy path no more!

"Even, then, without those yearnings of nature after farther existence, but as mere cold speculators, we say that the *apparent* irregularities in Providence of the world, and the unbending nature of the eternal justice, would alone prove that there must be some other state, some future inquiry, some future change, to bring all things right that are now wrong. But if there is no such state, no such inquiry, no change, no judgment, how miserably, how cruelly, as well as imperfectly, are we constituted—to live in perpetual fear of them, to apprehend something in death worse, infinitely worse, than death itself! For nothing was ever more accurate, as well as sublime, than the horrors detailed by the great master of nature, in his account of the fears of the guilty Claudio, even from the mere uncertainty of his future fate:—

> "To die, and *go we know not where!*
> . . . . . or to be worse than worst
> Of those, that lawless and *incertain* thoughts
> Imagine howling! 'Tis too horrible!
> The weariest and most loathed worldly life,
> That age, ache, penury, or imprisonment
> Can lay on nature, is a paradise
> To what we *fear* of death!"

Tremaine did not answer, but evidently, by his countenance and gestures, felt all the force, both of the reasoning and the poetry.

"We might certainly, therefore," continued Evelyn, "have been so formed, that death might have none of these terrors, and the wish to live again be absolute madness. Who wishes to inhabit the moon except a lunatic? If there is no hereafter, who would fear it but one equally mad?"

Tremaine again signified that he felt this to be true, but asked how it could be remedied.

"Easily," answered Evelyn, "for we might have been so constituted, as to lose friends the most affectionate, and children the most beloved, without thinking of them again; and as to ourselves, we might have carried on all the business of life, performed our fair duties, and answered all thet hen purposes of our creation, without that extent or refinement of reason, that view of futurity, which now belong to us. Speech, and some little more than the sense of an elephant, or the imitation of a monkey, would have done very well. We should have tilled the ground, bartered its produce, and governed by laws and the gibbet, in the same manner as now, or rather infinitely better, by having less reason, and less free-will. It is reason and free-will alone that confer upon us responsibility, and responsibility is nonsense without a future judgment."

Hete he made a considerable pause, and Tremaine, whose attention was at its height, waited in silence for him to go on.

"I have done," said Evelyn, "for I have promised you to content myself with what I deem proofs, and not to travel into conjecture. I therefore purposely avoid many beautiful reflections, as well as branches of argument, which are cogent enough as auxiliaries, but which I leave out of the case. I am willing to press nothing upon you, but what even a rhetorician, arguing for victory, cannot in my mind answer.

"One auxiliary, however, there is," continued Evelyn, "too imposing, if I may not say too convincing in its fabric and colouring, to let it pass unnoticed in an argument of this kind; and this I must therefore be forgiven if I lay before you, in all its beauty, and all its warmth."

"To what do you allude?" said Tremaine.

"To that melancholy, but too interesting lamentation of Wollaston, upon the disappointed lot of man, if, after all he has been allowed to enjoy, and expect as well as enjoy, he is to be levelled with the brutes, who never knew, never were allowed to entertain a notion of their Creator, or a hope of joining him.

"'Fancy,' says he, 'a man walking in some retired

field, far from noise, and free from prejudice. Would such meditations as these be unjust?—I know that I am nether a stock, nor a stone, nor a vegetating plant; I can reason as they, or even the sensitive animals cannot do. I may, therefore, pretend to be *much* above these things. *From what is, and has been, I can gather what may be, and, by thinking, can almost be said to get into another world beforehand; and whether I shall live again, I may be certainly said to be capable of such an expectation, and am solicitous about it; which cannot be said of these clods and brutes.* But can I be made capable of such great expectations, which those animals know nothing of (happier by far, in this regard than I, if we must die alike), only to be disappointed at last? Thus placed, just upon the confines of another better world, and fed with hopes of penetrating into it, and enjoying it, only to make a short appearance here, and then be shut out, and totally sunk? Must I, then, when I bid my last farewell to these walks, when I close these lids, and yonder blue regions, and all this scene darken upon me and go out,—must I then only serve to furnish dust, to be mingled with the ashes of these herds and plants, or with this dust under my feet? Have I been set so far above them in life, only to be levelled with them at death *?' "

Tremaine allowed both the beauty and argument contained in these passages, but hesitated—for he thought of Bolingbroke.

"And what says the noble philosopher," asked Evelyn, "to these glowing sentiments? That all this is *nonsense*, proceeding from the delirium of metaphysics; that the author is a 'whining philosopher,' a 'learned lunatic.'"

"The epithet might certainly have been spared," said Tremaine.

"It is, in truth, downright scolding," returned his friend, "a *polissonnerie*, a calling of names, in every body's power, though not at all uncommon with our noble philosopher. He here, it must be owned, a little forgot

* Religion of Nature, p. 219.

himself, and that high-breeding which even Lord Chesterfield celebrates, but which, unfortunately, whatever it might have been in the drawing-room, seems always to have been forgotten in the study."

"Allowing this," observed Tremaine, "there was at least another answer."

"You shall state it," cried Evelyn.

"I remember it well," said Tremaine, "and I own that it once much impressed me. It is, that we must submit to our nature, whatever it is, and that if we are doomed by God to be trod into dirt with others, our fellow-animals, no indignity is cast upon us; that we are removed, indeed, above them by our intellectual faculties, but only in degree, and above some of them in a very small degree; that we in other respects partake their nature, nay, the nature of mere vegetables, and those very clods to which Wollaston shows such a horror of being related. All, however, is a drama, in which we are appointed actors as well as they, and resignation to our fate, which we can neither sit in judgment upon nor comprehend, is the only duty we have to perform;—satisfied to live again if we may, to die if we may not, but certainly satisfied that God knows best what is good for us. These are the answers which Bolingbroke would have given Wollaston had he walked with him in his retired field*."

"And do they satisfy you?" asked Evelyn.

"I own not now, though I also own they once did, so far as to harden me against what I thought Bolingbroke had demonstrated to be the ejaculations of a melancholy spirit, rather than argument."

"That such a mind," replied Evelyn, "should be misled by so egregious a coxcomb!"

Tremaine almost started at this attack upon one who, for the fineness of his parts, and the attractions of his style, was still much an object of admiration with him.

* Lord Bolingbroke's Works, 4to. vol. v. sec. 50.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

BOLINGBROKE.

What says King Bolingbroke?

SHAKSPEARE.

His reasons are like two grains of mustard seed, hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them; and when you have them, they are not worth the search.

SHAKSPEARE.

"I ALLOW his fine parts," observed Evelyn, "and I am not ill disposed to allow a certain attraction in his style, particularly in his political writings, and most of all in his official correspondence. I am also not unwilling to say, that in the midst of such turbulence as an ambition almost frantic produced in his life, *Vacare literis* (to use his favourite expression), and to have addressed himself in seclusion, to subjects of such high import to the mind and heart of man, was alone a considerable praise.

"There is something in this so engaging to a real searcher after truth; the very notion of a philosophic retirement is so soothing to the soul; that I will confess to you I formerly, both in England and France (in which last kingdom he prepared many of his philosophical works), rode several miles out of my way to view the seats of his leisure at Fontainebleau and Dawley. At the last in particular, which, with pardonable affectation, he had painted over with rakes, and forks, and other rural emblems (fond as he was of calling it his farm), I lingered with interest. I fancied him there, ordering the motto over his hall-door, '*Satis beatus ruris honoribus*,' of which, he *said* at least, he was so fond. I saw him, with Pope, in his field, running after his cart (while Pope wrote between two hay-cocks), and viewing a rainy sky with a farmer's anxiety*. I followed them to the house, and listened to conversations which no mind

* See Pope's Letters.

imbued with anything like classical impressions can imagine, without feeling great interest for the speakers. But having said this, here I take my leave of him."

"You have almost made amends by these admissions," returned Tremaine, "for the hard word you gave him just now."

"I cannot retract it," replied Evelyn; "for with all his attainments and love of inquiry, a more egregious coxcomb never pretended to the palm of philosophy. The same rash fatality which characterised and ruined his political life, seems to have pursued him here; and though, as I have said, I allow the fineness of his genius, I cannot disguise my contempt for him as a reasoner."

"Are you quite sure," asked Tremaine, "that there is no prejudice in this?"

"No man can be thus sure," replied Evelyn: "but I can be quite sure both that his arguments, as to essentials, were a tissue of mere pompous nothings, and that his self-sufficiency and affectation made him as offensive in his mode of putting them, as they were weak when put."

"And yet," replied Tremaine, "no man brought forward either more learning or more eloquence in support of the system."

"He had no system," answered Evelyn, "nor has he even pretended to any. Though I will do him the justice to believe he would have set one up, had he known how. He is, therefore, singularly obliged to you for giving him what he never could give himself."

"He was keen in exposing error," said Tremaine, "and supported his attacks with an erudition that astonished the world."

"There are two worlds," returned Evelyn, drily, "the learned and the unlearned. The last, perhaps, he might astonish. He had, at least, much pride, if I may not rather say vanity, in displaying this learning of his. He most certainly never lost a customer for want of exhibiting his goods. Like a small capitalist, his wares were always arranged to the best advantage, in the show-window of his shop, for passengers to admire. Yet what was said of him by Hunter, a blind and obscure, but learned parson

in Cheshire, was no more than true: 'His erudition was neither deep nor exact*.' Bishop Newton, too, I think, convicted him of gross mistakes in his quotations of authors, such as attributing the Codex Alexandrinus to George the Monk, a man who knew nothing about it; such as that Virgil might have given the palm of writing history to the Romans above the Grecians, and proving it by Livy and Tacitus, one of whom had not begun to write, nor the other to live, when Virgil died. To be sure any one else might make these mistakes, but any one else who could make them, would never have usurped the high tone of insolence with which he seems to issue his decrees on all subjects, from his literary chair. Infallibility itself could not justify this, but fallibility so detected, and of which a school-boy might be ashamed, ought to have been at least more modest."

"The insolence you talk of never struck me," said Tremaine; "nay, he was celebrated for good-breeding."

"Yet all who differed from him," replied Evelyn, "were whiners, or madmen. Wollaston, we see, was both; and Clarke, whom he has the presumption to call presumptuous, together with most of the ancients, particularly Plato and Socrates, were the last. He thinks, too, had Aristotle's works been destroyed, learning and truth would have been better advanced. If this allude to Aristotle himself, never was there a more unlearned or sillier observation. This, however, is mere foppery, and despicable enough, particularly as I doubt his powers of understanding Aristotle—at least, in Greek. At the same time, for his own presumption, I need only refer you to the decent epithets which he scatters, with so full and muddy a hand, upon all, whether old or modern, sacred or profane, who ever cultivated the ethical science, or aspired to philosophy before him. He says, all are mad, foolish, dreaming *Noctambules*, fit patients for Monroe; rogues and impostors, liars or drivellers,—particularly the divines, who, be sure, are always coupled with the atheists.

* See Hunter's Sketch of Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy.

"Wollaston asks *impertinent questions*, because he ventures against materialism, to demand, if matter thinks, where it begins to think? And yet, perhaps, a more obvious question never presented itself on such a subject. And for what all this abuse? For presuming to have had opinions, which this paragon Lord does not approve."

"You surely do not mean that he condemns all?" interrupted Tremaine.

"All, on my word. But no! I correct myself, for the real atheists, and some few violent theists, are excepted. Democritus, Epicurus, and the atomists of that school—and Hobbes, and some of his fellow moderns;—these illustrious few are not disrespectfully spoken of. But for Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and such Sciolists—of course St. Paul, and the Fathers, and all Christian Polemics, Malebranche, Des Cartes, and even, in some instances, Locke, much more the irrefutable Clarke, and this excellent Wollaston,—these are mere pigmies in knowledge or wisdom, compared with this notable Lord and scholar, this prince of *philosophes soi-disants!*"

"I will grant you there was presumption," said Tremaine, with a little uneasiness; "but after all, must we not measure this by his real attainments and weigh his pretensions by his own worth?"

"Nothing more fair," replied Evelyn; "and of that worth I would wish to take measure. Of his boasted learning I have already given a hint, though I mean not to undervalue it. Considering his busy life, and the headlong passion, described by Chesterfield, with which he gave himself up to the most licentious pleasures, as well as to the toils of an ambition that was absolutely insane, his acquirements were astonishing. But they were not all that they appeared. I repeat, I believe he had little or no Greek, if only because he does not quote that language;—which he would have been too proud to have done if he could. His opinion of Herodotus, who, according to him, was a mere story-teller, who even professed no object but to amuse, is at variance with the

judgment of all real scholars. But his Lordship was a great gleaner; a great and adroit retailer of passages which he well knew how to use. His memory (his chief gift) made that his own which belonged to other people. His quotations are as often the quotations of quotations, as original. He sometimes confesses the citation of a philosopher, or a tenet, from the logic of Port Royal. Cudworth, while he was actually criticising him, gave him much, nay, most of what he had; and old Montaigne not a little. Thus, his discoveries were borrowed from preceding navigators; and their errors as well as knowledge were alike made his own. Immediate purpose was everything. What most annoys us is the waste of his acquisitions. Affecting the fine gentleman, and to hold pedantry in contempt, he is himself the most sovereign of pedants."

Tremaine smiled at this warmth, but did not contradict the assertion.

"It has been well said of him," continued Evelyn, "that he overwhelms himself and his reader with names and opinions; and half his displays are to combat dreams of ancient writers who dream no more. As curiosities, they may be read, but nobody follows them. Who now cares for Plato *as a guide*, any more than for Bolingbroke himself?"

"In this last part of your critique, I agree with you," said Tremaine.

"But I have a worse quarrel with him," proceeded Evelyn.

"Let us hear it all," said Tremaine, half smiling.

"He has presumed to call such a man as Clarke presumptuous. Do you recollect the ingenuousness with which he states some of this presumption?"

"I do not," answered Tremaine; "or at least not what you point at."

"He misrepresents," proceeded Evelyn, "not merely Clarke, but almost the whole body of divines who presume, against his Lordship, to believe the course of human affairs not quite so uniformly marked with justice in the different lots of virtue and vice, as to preclude the

necessity for something different in a world to come. This he converts into an absolute railing against Providence, though it in fact is the reverse. But this we could forgive. What I complain of, is not merely a misunderstanding, but a misquotation, and that a very gross one, of Clarke's, I will not say sentiments (for these he might not understand), but his language, which every one is bound to set forth in fairness."

"That is so clear," said Tremaine, "that I shall be surprised as well as sorry if you make it out."

"Yet he observes," continued Evelyn, "that Clarke complains that there are not, in many ages, plain evidences enough of the interposition of divine Providence, to convince men of the wisdom, any more than of the justice and goodness of God*.

"Will it be believed, that this is stated as a real representation, and the very pages referred to as proofs!"

"In what are they not?" asked Tremaine.

"Judge for yourself," said Evelyn. "What Clarke really says is, that, *at first sight*, it may appear strange that in physics the use of everything, from the star to the pebble, seems plain at once; while in morals, there seem not in many ages plain evidences to convince men of this wisdom, justice, and goodness. 'But if,' he continues, 'we consider the matter more closely and attentively, it will not appear so strange and astonishing.'

"He then goes on to compare this world to a great, complex, fine wrought, and admirable machine; of which, if a man examine it by parts, he cannot, he says, be a fair judge of the whole, though he may understand the immediate use of the parts; and that the whole will only be revealed to us 'at the conclusion of this present state,' when men '*will be surprised with the amazing manifestations of justice and goodness, which will then appear to have run through the whole series of God's government of the moral world.*'

* Fragments, sect. 55.

" Here let us pause," said Evelyn.

" I see all the comment you are inclined to make," cried Tremaine, " and I am willing to spare myself the pain of thinking how accurately you have brought home your charge against a man I had thought at least more correct."

" You see he is absolutely false," continued Evelyn. " He is false in saying Clarke '*complains*.' He is false in suppressing that what did seem to appear strange, *only did so at first sight;* and he is particularly false in representing Clarke to say, that there are not plain evidences enough of justness and goodness; of which, in the end, he actually says, the whole moral government of the world will appear to be full, when all are considered together."

" This is but true," said Tremaine.

" Such," continued Evelyn, " is his representation of others. Now as to his own tenets. If Wollaston whined or was lunatic, be Bolingbroke's the praise of firmness and of common sense, who reduces us all to grovel in our instincts,—denying us the power, by abstract reasoning and induction, to arrive at the nature of the soul, so far as to believe in what we hope—her immortality. Be his the praise of not being able to contemplate anything beyond his outward senses; and being ready, therefore, to sink in death with his fellow-brutes, unmindful of his Maker; and at best, indifferent whether he is minded by Him."

" I should say this was not a just account," observed Tremaine, " for he always admitted there *might be* a future state, and, as such, prescribed the hope of it."

" For which hope," interrupted Evelyn, " he not only never gave a reason, beyond that it was not impossible, but attacked all reasons that ever were given for it by others, with a rancour which was only the more remarkable for those very shallow dogmata of his own, on which his enmity to others was founded."

" I know not your exact allusion," said Tremaine.

" I mean," replied Evelyn, " those wonderful dis-

coveries which he details with such dignity, that what has existence exists, and what has no existence exists not; that sensual objects are the objects of sense; and objects knowable, are objects of knowledge. This one could bear, as what I have called it, a pompous nothing; but when he goes on, and sums up all his admissions as to the Deity, into a sense of his power,—denying any proof of his goodness and other moral attributes, we know not which to do most—hate such ingratitude, or deride such emptiness."

"With my present feelings," observed Tremaine, "I can allow you to say this."

"But pray observe the reasons," continued Evelyn, "of this wonderful reasoner, who was to beat down all reasoners that ever went before him. He goes on to tell you, that you are to inquire no farther than what appears,—content with phenomena; that a plain man, who is your only true philosopher, presumes not to affirm any proposition not affirmed by those phenomena,—which cannot lead him far in his inquiries about spirit, though very far as to corporeal nature; and that if he asks, why? he will give himself this plain answer—that men have, as to the one, means in their power, proportioned in some degree to the end; but they have them not in the other *in any degree*, though they proceed *phantastically* as if they had*

"Thus, all the high reasoning, the grand, the intense interest which agitate the soul as to its being, its operations, and its ultimate fate, are, according to this Lord, this infallible, and, indeed, only discoverer of truth, a mere phantasma."

"Are you clear that this is so?" cried Tremaine; "or have I so misread or so forgotten him, as ever to have believed otherwise?"

"I am very clear," said Evelyn, "for he proceeds with his plain man, and observes, that if he is asked whether he thinks matter can be pleasure or pain, or feel desire or aversion, or have ideas, the plain man can only answer, that he cannot conceive how matter

* Essay I.

becomes capable of all this, any more than how many other things are as they are; '*but that he has pushed inquiry as far as the true means of inquiry are open; that is, as far as phenomena can guide him; that he cannot draw any other conclusion from them than this,—that all animal systems are material, and that he must content himself with this, unless some other can be drawn from the same phenomena.*—And this is the sum of his boasted philosophy."

"Yet he allows," said Tremaine, "that thought could not be matter; and so far you agree with him."

"I do," replied Evelyn; "but you will recollect, he also denies it to be spiritual,—with a view, of course, to get rid of its immortal nature. And he solves the difficulty, it must be owned, with most admirable proof."

"I know not what is coming," said Tremaine.

"Why, this wonderful stickler for sensible demonstration; this enemy of all hypothesis; this stern and stubborn demander of evidence, who rejects all argument from feeling, and derides all those who presume to trust any thing to supposition,—tells you, that 'the faculty of thinking, in all the modes of thought, *may have been* superadded by Omnipotence to certain systems of matter;' and this, in all the dignity of the dogmatism he so abuses, he adds, it is not less than blasphemous to deny."

"I remember this," observed Tremaine, "nor can I even now see he is wrong."

"Agreed," said Evelyn, "and I allow the possibility (and that is all) to which this amounts. But is *possibility* then, after all, the whole of these boasted discoveries?—possibility unsupported, and not even attempted to be supported, I will not say by argument, but by any thing. Is it for this that Bolingbroke is canonised? This possibility, observe, is not that matter thinks, but that thought *may be* superadded to matter. And is this giant, who is to destroy all systems, founded upon ever so much seeming probability, such universal and intense feeling in every man's heart—is he himself to be let off with a '*may be*,' founded upon nothing? Is this the doctrine which is to overturn all we so fondly hope, and put down all that has been so excellently reasoned; to convict Clarke of pre-

sumption, Wollaston of impertinence, and all divines of hypothetical dreaming?

"But that I know he meant the reverse, I should say that, in this, he even agreed with *us*. For what do we hold, in addition to the impossibility of matter's thinking, but that there is an union of two distinct substances, matter, and spirit, mysterious and unknowable, and only certain in its effects?"

Tremaine seemed to assent, and Evelyn went on:—

"What I chiefly, however, mention this for (next to the wish, as I said, of taking measure of this Lord's wonderful discoveries), was to show the extraordinary right he has to quarrel with others, for presuming to rely upon supposition, although never so warranted by fact. In particular, I would wish to correct by it his arrogant taunt of Wollaston, where he observes, how little it becomes him or any man to presume to urge in defence of hypothesis, that 'many things are by ways which we cannot understand.' Let his own '*may be*' answer this."

Tremaine, in some agitation, and after two or three questionings, allowed that he found Evelyn was right.

"Are you satisfied, then," pursued his friend, "I will not say to *be* the brute he makes us (for that no one would be that could help it), but to believe it *proved* that you are so, by evidence so clear, by reasoning so profound, by superiority to all intellect and all learning, so manifest and so consummate?"

"You triumph," said Tremaine.

"No! not absolutely triumph; but I own I wish to prove that I am not unjust in the contempt I have professed for this very shallow, and very self-sufficient Lord. When he comes to broach his own principles I give his pen all the credit you can claim for his well-turned periods; nay, I will own, he is powerful in sifting and overturning the errors of others; but with such personal vanity as swells him, such affectation of wisdom, such real weakness, may I not be permitted to bestow upon him the very epithet he does not blush to apply to Seneca, whom he calls *a stoical fop*—himself the prince of all fops?"

"Still you think too meanly of him," said Tremaine.

"I think him," replied Evelyn, "as I have said, a flimsy sciolist, with all his learning; nor can we wonder at Burke's exclamation, 'Who now reads Bolingbroke?—who ever read him throughout?'"

"My dear friend," said Tremaine, "if I allowed you to go on you would become a railer. You almost already emulate Warburton, and but that you are not absolutely so coarse, I should have thought that divine had uttered many of the sentences I have been listening to. You must not be surprised if I am not at my ease to see a once dazzling authority so broken down, and his acquisitions (admired and acknowledged by all) so undervalued. At any rate, I own you beat me out of all guard and fence. I must ever admire St. John, but I can no longer shelter myself behind him as an authority."

"Let us compound," said Evelyn: "I will join you in the admiration of his parts, and you shall give him up to me as a philospher."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

PREPARATION.

I dare not say
How near the tidings of our comfort are.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE notes from which I have formed this history supply me with little more of the philosophical or religious discussions between our two friends; certainly, with no more that occurred in the Episcopal garden at Orleans.

In fact, Tremaine is described as having become silent and abstracted during the rest of the excursion, and as scarcely uttering a sentence during the row back to

Mount St. Jules, at the foot of which Evelyn landed him, and they took leave of one another with emphatic and meaning looks, though almost without a word. Each was nearly exhausted, and stood in need of repose. Here, however, Evelyn had all the advantage; for to see, and be greeted as he was by Georgina, after so many hours' absence, was repose enough.

It was late in the day when he returned, and his daughter, with opening arms and a beaming countenance, was at the little garden-gate to welcome him, after what she called a long, long delay.

Such greeting could not fail to dissipate the air of seriousness which hung still upon his brow—the consequence, not merely of the deep discussions in which he had been tried, but of the various plans which he had been revolving during the passage from Orleans, for which Tremaine's silence and self-meditation had given him ample leisure.

In all his reflections, however, there was now something consolatory. Whatever difficulties still remained to be smoothed, it was evident he had gained a sincere victory in essentials, over the scepticism of Tremaine. The whole fabric of that friend's doubts had been undermined, and they tottered to their foundations. It was scarcely possible, after his frequent and candid, we may say, his joyful admissions, that complete recovery was not at hand, although time might certainly, and surely not unnaturally, be required to settle the many complicated topics which had employed him, into something like order. In the main, however, Evelyn saw enough had been done to open a wide passage to all he so devoutly wished. He could not but remember the important position from which Tremaine had set out, two days before, that if the difficulties presented by natural religion, by metaphysics, and the philosophy which, through Bolingbroke, had for so many years swayed him, could be got over, the admission of all those important postulates which Paley prefixes to his Evidences of Revelation, would soon follow, and then .....

All this had flashed through Evelyn's mind, with the

rapidity of thought when it obeys our happiest hopes, our fondest desires; and though he allowed as much as any one for the return of old feelings, yet he recollected that still older feelings, in short, the earliest, had been of a contrary cast. Can we wonder, then, if this good father, naturally confiding, and even sanguine in his nature, fond of Tremaine, and actually admiring him for the utmost delicacy of honour, should already have conceived hopes that all he so wished was upon the eve of being accomplished?

When he met Georgina, therefore, at the gate, he had shaken off his seriousness, and greeted her with more than his usual happiness of smile; and when—half jest, half earnest—she complained of his very long absence, and asked what he had been about, that had so detained him, he replied, "I won't be catechised," with so much of (almost) playfulness mixed with his decision of tone, that, though her curiosity was raised, all uneasiness was put to flight.

A second attack upon him was parried by a declaration that he was so cravingly hungry, it was impossible he could give any account of the fine service he had attended in the cathedral, or the fine holiday he had been witnessing in the Bishop's garden, till after dinner. Lisette had told Georgina that it was a *grand jour de fête* at Orleans, with something like a sigh that she had not been able to attend; and had said so much about the grand ceremonies, and grand music, and the promenade afterwards in the palace garden, and Georgina had been contriving so many plans to gratify her, though all had proved abortive; that, in truth, a less guileless young woman than herself would have been content to lay the blame of her father's absence entirely upon the occurrences of this fête alone.

And now the Doctor, having got rid of all the Orleans dust, with which the sand of the Bishop's walks had plentifully supplied him, and having, moreover, in the few minutes of his retirement, taken his resolution how to act, rejoined his daughter—determined from that moment to prepare her for all the wonders he had to relate. He

sat down, therefore, to his repast, in the highest good-humour, both with himself and Georgina, whom he complimented on improved looks, with peculiar pleasure. He was soon, however, pressed into the service of relating all he had seen in the chapel and the palace, not a little to the discomfiture of Lisette, whose waiting was completely spoiled by it, The regret, indeed, of having missed "*un si grand bonheur*," entirely got the better of her, and, after two or three mistakes behind Georgina's chair, she exclaimed, in all the bitterness of a French girl's despair, "Oh! mon Dieu! toute la ville, et je n'y fus pas!"

The Doctor, to console her, said they should all go in the new barge to Orleans the next day, when the service was to be repeated, and the promenade too.

"I think you so improved, my dear love," said he to Georgina, "that even you might enjoy it, if the weather, as is likely, continue."

Georgina sighed at the word *enjoy*.

When they were alone—"I agree, my dearest Georgy," said her father, "to enjoy is much for us to expect; and yet, from my own sensations, I am not without the hope that joy is not yet extinct for either of us."

"I could almost suppose from your manner, my dear father," replied Georgina, "you had made some discovery that was at least agreeable."

She said this with inquiring, if not anxious eyes, and she thought of her general situation, rather than of Tremaine particularly; though, if an indistinct idea of his image flitted across her imagination as she said it, you who have ever known what it is to love, much more to be forced to banish the object of your affections, say whether you can blame her!

"Not to keep you in suspense, my sweet Georgy," replied her father, "I confess that I *have* discovered things at Orleans rather of more consequence than Jomelli, or the happy *bourgeoisie* I have been describing."

"You will tell it me in your own good time," cried Georgina, striving to suppress agitation which began to be too strong for her.

Her father, who watched her critically, then said, "To

prevent too great expectation, I will tell you at once, dear love, that you may soon expect to hear of your pretty friend Mélainie."

The joy with which this was received was certainly not unaccompanied by disappointment, and even by something like vexation. Evelyn saw this, when, in return for his communication, she expressed the pleasure it gave her, and asked particulars, perhaps not with so much eagerness as, at another time, she would have shown.

"One seldom goes into a continental banker's shop," replied he, "without picking up something besides money: so I have brought away the newspaper, with an account of the changes of quarters in our army of observation in France, in which I naturally looked for anything that might concern Colonel Osmond and his bride."

"They are at Cambrai," said Georgina.

"They *were* at Cambrai," returned Evelyn; "but the Cambrai letter here says, 'We have lost our commandant, who has asked and obtained leave of absence for two months, to visit, with his beautiful bride, the inheritance of Mount St. Jules, near Orleans, to which she has so recently been restored.'"

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed Georgina, with eagerness, "Mount St. Jules! This is indeed a wonder no one could have expected."

"And why not?" said the Doctor. "Where is the wonder, that a lady should succeed to an estate entailed upon her by her grandmother, or visit it when duly put in possession by law?"

"But that we should be here in her own very house, and know nothing of its being her's.....!"

"How could we," returned Evelyn, "when it is only a banker that knows anything, and it was only to-day that I saw Monsieur d'Oisant and his newspaper?"

"Ah! my dear father, it cannot have been without design you brought me hither. In this pretty place your romance seems to have revived, and even revelled. It accounts for your long absences at the château. You have known this secret long, and only kept it from me in consideration of my weakness and my....."

At this she stopped, a deep sigh escaped her, and her nerves were beginning to be unstrung.

"On my word," said her father, moved by her emotion, "I knew not, till I first visited the château, to whom it belonged; nor, till Monsieur d'Oisant told me, how soon our little friend and her gallant husband might be here."

"Tell it me all," said Georgina, thinking now only of Mélainie.

The Doctor then recounted, with some care, lest he should be caught tripping, and not, as he said, without a little cheating of the devil (a favourite phrase of his), what he had learned from Tremaine, the Banker, and the Bishop; that old Madame de Montauban, the Count's mother, had been the heiress of St. Jules, which was settled, on her marriage, upon her second son if she had two; if only one, on her eldest daughter; failing which, upon the children of her heir, in the same manner; that, leaving the Count her sole heir, the estate descended to Mélainie, in due course of law; and that, after a long and hopeless interruption, occasioned by the Revolution, the return of the old order had invested her with this agreeable inheritance, which, in company with her husband, she was hastening to visit, without the least knowledge of who were in the neighbourhood.

"And when may they be expected?" asked Georgina.

"To-night, to-morrow, or next day,—any day, or any hour," said Evelyn. "Monsieur d'Oisant has hurried on the furnishing, and has announced that the château would be ready by the time they could arrive; and to-day's newspaper, you see, tells us they have set out."

"My dear Mélainie!" cried Georgina: "But she will find me much altered."

"I trust you will alter again, my love," observed her father, cheerfully, though thoughtfully; "and then my favourite line of prophecy will be realised—

> 'The liquid drops of tears that you have shed
> Shall come again, transform'd to orient pearl.'"

So saying, he embraced her, and, without knowing why, she felt much soothed.

CHAPTER XL.

DISCLOSURE.

What did he when thou saw'st him? What said he? How look'd he? What makes he here? Did he ask for me? Where remains he? And when shalt thou see him again?

SHAKSPEARE.

Perhaps I need not inform the reader of what his imagination must have told him, the moment Mélainie was mentioned—that it was the connexion of Tremaine with his excellent friend Osmond, that had seated him in the retirement of the château of St. Jules.

Recluse as he thought himself at Oxford, and as, indeed, for several months he actually had been, he caught a sudden alarm at the sight of the superscription of the letter from Mr. Davenport to Evelyn, which has been mentioned. His resolution, his thoughts, occupations, and studies, were all overturned by it; and he fled, almost the next day. At that moment, he received from Osmond an account of Mélainie's establishment in her rights, adding so romantic a description of the château, which he lamented that his duty prevented him from inhabiting, that Tremaine caught at it, and only the more for its deserted state. He asked, and received the loan of it from his friend, whose steward he offered to be till he wished to inhabit it; fitting up only a room for himself. This, Osmond, who knew and indulged his humour, instantly complied with.

Hence, all that has been related, both as to the at first denuded state of the house, and the busy bustle that instantly succeeded, to make it habitable.

Upon being acquainted with the particulars of Mélainie's succession, Georgina became remarkably thoughtful. Her joy at the expected meeting was most sincere; but her thoughts wandered. Nor was Evelyn much less meditative and absent.

At length, after a pause, "You bear this, dear love," said he, "less well than I expected."

"I hope not," replied Georgina; "I am sure I rejoice to think such good friends so near; but I own . . . ."

"What does my Georgy own?"

"I am wondering whether [Colonel Osmond] will not bring us some information concerning———him we have lost," faltered Georgina.

"Perhaps he will," replied her father, as coolly as he could.

"'Tis at least natural he should know something," said the anxious girl.

"Nothing so natural," rejoined her father.

"And yet, when you wrote to the Colonel," observed Georgina, "he knew, or would tell nothing."

"That was a long time ago," said the Doctor.

Georgina looked in her father's face, to see if there was anything there that gave a meaning to these words, more than their simple import; and, in her anxiety to know, she thought she could discover there was something still behind, that he was desirous, yet hesitating to tell.

"My dearest father will not, I am sure, deceive nor even conceal from me anything I ought to know," said Georgina; "only tell me that all is well, or at least not ill, and I will be satisfied."

But here emotion got the better of her, and her quick breathing—which always created alarm in her anxious parent—for a time made him repent his too sudden design (as he began to think it) of disclosing all he knew.

Big, indeed, with so many important objects and feelings, he was scarcely less moved himself; and his eyes more than glistened when he told her that all was not only not ill, but, as he hoped, well.

Georgina, astonished, begged him to go on,—declaring she was particularly calm; and, to prove it, gave him one of those smiles which always forced him to do whatever she pleased.

But here, reader, I must stop, and crave thee to help

me in what remains of my task. It is not easy, neither would it perhaps amuse, or even interest, to tell thee in detail, what thou must long ago have foreseen, and what, if thou hast a heart such as can taste this history, thou canst imagine better than I can tell it thee.

In fine, Evelyn, perceiving that his daughter was in such a state of suspicion, of raised expectation, of hope, doubt, and fear, that it would really do her more harm than good to leave her longer in ignorance, resolved, whatever the consequence of discovery, to go on with his design; and he did so the more readily, I may say the more cheerfullly, from the conviction which he assured Georgina was on his mind, that the errors of Tremaine were fast fading away, if not entirely cured.

Georgina's was, as we have seen, a firm mind—firmer than most; and it must be owned, it required all the firmness she possessed to bear this communication so as not to be entirely overset by it. The embraces and soothing of her father, and his encouragement of her, not merely to talk, but to give vent to her feelings, were at last attended with what he desired,—a soft relaxation of that pent up effort which sometimes is too much for our nature.

He was, therefore, not ill pleased to see, instead of violence and hysterics, her eyes overflow in precious drops, which might truly be compared to a 'gentle rain from Heaven,' if the paleness of her cheek, and the agitation of her features, had not rather likened them to what the same inspired painter has called—

The honey-dew upon a gathered lily.

It was, indeed, long, very long, before she was sufficiently recovered to speak with common collectedness.

That Tremaine—the admired, the loved, the respected, (respected with all his errors)—should be so near her, nay, have been so for three whole days—approaching so fast, as her father said, to all they both wished, so as to remove the whole cause of that dreadful mental and bodily suffering which had almost reduced her to the grave;—that he should have preserved all his love, and,

what was almost of as much importance, cleared himself of those semblances of unkindness on his retreat, which had so much added to her distress;—that all this should be, seemed indeed a dream, if not a miracle; and the task of her father, to keep her calm, was, with all his caution, difficult indeed.

Good sense prevailed, and resignation, which often supplies its place where it is not. United, how could they fail? The evening was not far advanced, when Evelyn had the delight of finding her inclined to walk, and, though agitated, yet not enough so to alarm him for her, while questioning him even to minuteness upon all the great points that now involved her dearest interests.

We may suppose the great point of all was not forgotten; nor can we be surprised that, on this, her father's asserted satisfaction was sufficient warranty for hers.

"I think we may depend upon it," said her father, "that his pride is beaten down; and his masters having lost their authority, nature and natural feeling have resumed their power over him. In truth, he is no longer the same person. I had a fear, indeed, but it was dissipated almost as soon as conceived."

Georgina somewhat anxiously asked the nature of that fear.

"I feared that you, or the hope of you, might have had too much influence in the change; but I am convinced it is not so. Indeed, the obstinacy, or rather pertinacity, with which he defended all his doubts, proves this: for he was armed at all points, and so powerfully, that I assure you I scarcely wonder at his resistance, or the hold which error had taken of him. His very enthusiasm (for I think his feeling amounted to it), made him only the more obnoxious to mistake. No! much as he loves you, I am quite sure that even *you* have had nothing to do with his renunciations."

"Did this appear?" asked Georgina, with some curiosity.

"It more than appeared," said Evelyn; "it was solemnly asserted by himself; and I am convinced that

what he intimated was true—that his very jealousy and suspicion of himself, in this particular, have only prolonged this singular contest. But for this, he would not have fled from Oxford—perhaps even would have returned to us."

"He will return now?" said Georgina, hesitatingly.

"I have but to hold up my finger," answered Evelyn, "and he will be at your feet."

Georgina trembled, and leaned more closely on her father, who felt he had gone as far as her state would permit.

"Be not alarmed, my love," added he; "you shall yourself be the arbitress of his probation; I only give you leave to make it as short as your feelings and your strength will permit."

CHAPTER XLI.

CONCLUSION.

This day shall be a love-day.

SHAKSPEARE.

I do not shame
To tell you what I was, since my *conversion*
So sweetly tastes, being the thing I am.

SHAKSPEARE.

All the belfries in Orleans, and one or two *clochers* to boot, that reared their little heads between the city and Mount St. Jules, had been ringing their hearts out for full an hour, before Osmond and *sa belle héritière, en barouche à cinq chevaux*, arrived at Monsieur d'Oisant, the banker's, and, after partaking a collation offered them by that well-bred gentleman, embarked in a barge he had prepared for them, in order to proceed by water to their newly fitted chateau.

An attendant barge, filled with music, the horns of

which excited beautiful echoes on both sides of the river, accompanied them on the way; and the acclamations of a cloud of people styled *les pauvres de la ville*, among whom Osmond had ordered fifty louis to be distributed, raised a cry of joy, not the least of those satisfactory sounds which welcomed Mélainie d'Osmond, *née* de St. Jules (for that was now her designation), to the seat of her ancestors.

The scene was so gay, so gilded, so happy—a virtuous (are we not to add, a romantic?) union seemed so perfectly crowned—the boatmen were so proud of their pretty mistress, and the vessel seemed so proud of itself—it danced, indeed, so buoyant on the waters—that we, who saw their approach, thought of some of the most beautiful passages of Gray, without their threatening conclusion:—

> Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
> While, proudly riding o'er the azure realm,
> In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,—
> Youth on the prow, and pleasure at the helm.

So it seemed, and so it was; for happier people never existed than Osmond and his bride. But there were others as happy.

It will be recollected, that Georgina, too, had a boat, not so fine, indeed, as Monsieur d'Oisant's inventive powers had made the bridal conch (for such was its French taste) of Mélainie, but still a very pleasure-giving boat; and this had pulled up to the stairs of the fishing-house but a few minutes before Tremaine led her (for he actually did lead her) through the walk that was bounded by the river, and embarked with her and her father to meet their friends, whom they now judged to be midway from Orleans to the château.

But, as I have observed, I never was good at a *scene*, though I can relate what is told me with fidelity enough. And this must be my excuse, if I have passed over a much more touching, as well as important one, than the meeting of these good friends, which yet I mean to pass over too.

Tremaine had received that beckon of Evelyn, which he talked of making when Georgina permitted it; and the consequence was exactly as Evelyn had prophesied,—for, in a very few minutes indeed after Tremaine received the summons, he was at her feet: not, however, to be unqualifiedly happy—for the wan and worn countenance he beheld struck him with dismay; nor was it relieved by the sweetness of that heavenly smile which we have so often endeavoured to make the reader feel. In truth, the contrast only made both more affecting: for, if he thought Heaven opened upon him, it was only to fear that it was about to close for ever.

And yet a delicious confusion tinged for a moment with rose the wanness which appalled him;—but only for a moment: for it was the rose of joy, indeed, but not of health; too sad, as well as too beautiful an illustration of a beautiful description, I think, by Fox:—

"And friendship gives what cruel health denies."

Forty-eight hours, however, produced changes that rejoiced his heart; for, as restraint, anxiety, and uncertainty, wore off, ease and even cheerfulness returned, and he had the bliss of recognising something like a renovation of those *riants* looks, and that delightful sweetness, which, as he thought, no other countenance ever exhibited.

We may suppose farther explanations were held with Evelyn, and, through him (for he would allow none from Tremaine himself), with Georgina; but I will not mention one of them. It is sufficient that all Evelyn's hopes were realised, and that he already felt full conviction that the terms originally proposed by Tremaine might now be accepted, with the most perfect reliance upon not merely a future, but a speedy satisfaction, upon *every point.*

Yes! upon *every one!* For, "vain wisdom" and "false philosophy" being now beaten down, how easy, as well as how consoling, was the belief of revelation!—and, if Locke, if Newton, if Bacon, if Boyle, were

Christians, because wiser than all others in metaphysics, as well as physics, and profoundly wiser in the very points of what Bolingbroke so strongly demands—*phenomena*, what wonder if Bolingbroke's pupil, his mistakes set right, felt obliged to follow them?

And follow them he did, even their whole length, and with his whole heart; and, almost by the time that he led his rich reward, his lovely bride, to the altar; certainly before he had been long the happy husband he afterwards became.

In fact, the arguments that have been related, pondered over and over again, led him to this:—that there was no contradiction; but, on the contrary, that everything in natural, led to the support of revealed religion: and that the very doubts and difficulties which attend the one, are the strongest reasons (always supposing contradiction removed), to induce the belief of a necessity for the other.

I have little more to say; nay, I have done: for the total change of that mental feeling, which had been the sole cause of Georgina's decay of health, soon produced that other change which it pleased Heaven not to deny; and it was with delight, exquisite as had been his misery, that Evelyn saw the opinion of the physicians confirmed, that bodily disease had not irrecoverably spread.

Near two months spent in absolute bliss at St. Jules, where she daily gained strength, proved this to all their heart's content; after which, it had been settled that they should return to England, and in a month more that our admired girl should be established mistress at Woodington, as she had long been enthroned queen in the heart of its owner.

All these tidings were duly communicated to one whom we hope the reader has not forgotten: that trusty, rough, but excellent friend, that zealous, bustling, and original piece of Yorkshire, that type of honesty and all good feeling, Jack Careless, who has been but too long out of sight. His affliction at losing his friends had been so great, that he fain would have accompanied them, not-

withstanding his hatred to France: and this perhaps was only forbidden by Georgina's weak state, which made her father fear so robust a companion.

To him, however, everything that might be deemed incident, was now communicated;—the stopping at the fishing-house, the meeting with Tremaine in the gallery of St. Jules, his sojourn there, his junction with the Evelyns, his offer, and his acceptance. Nor do I know that I can better wind up this history, than with the answer of this genuine son of nature and Yorkhire, exactly transcribed as follows:—

"*Bachelor's Hall, August —.*

"My dear 'Squire and Doctor,

"I never was so surprised nor so overjoyed in all my whole life, as at the receipt of your kind letter. I was so happy for dear Georgy, to think she was better, and you so hopeful she would get well, besides them other extraordinary things you tell about, and all that was to be, that, in short, I could eat no dinner yesterday, though my supper was not the worse for it.

"I hope I did not do wrong in telling Becky a great deal, but, indeed, the poor woman thonght dear Georgy worse, seeing I could not eat, and began to take on so, that I was obliged to give her a bit of comfort, so now the whole town has it, and the bells at Belford, Evelyn, and Woodington, are all ringing as if it was Statute fair.

"I have set a barrel of beer a-running, and am just come out of the cellar with half a dozen bottles of wine for Becky for dinner, for I have sent to Checkers for John Christmas and Mary, and to Evelyn for Margaret, gardener, butler, and cook, and went myself to Woodington, to inform Mrs. Watson, and ask her to the feast; but the old soul declined, telling me that it was not the way to thank God. She, however, cried enough, which I suppose was *her* way, and an odd one too. I also nabbed landlord of Hound and Horn, who happened to come in just in the nick, and them and the farmer and his wife, and any more as I dare say I shall see that

loves Georgy, will make it merry enough. I am not sure that I shall not take a bit with them myself—why should'nt I?

"Every body is mad with joy at your all being so much better, which seems to me, however, rather out of the way in regard to the place. For I often wonder why it is that sick people so often get well in France, when they can't do so in England, not even in Yorkshire. Howsoever, I care not how it is done, if my dear Georgy is really better, and though I am to lose my little wife, I won't mind if it's for her good, which, to be sure, it is, for Woodington 'Squire is a noble fellow, with all his crankums; don't tell tho'. As to your account how it all came about, that is the most wonderful of all. It seems downright conjuration, and I should say Rector was bamming, if I did not know he would scorn to do so with such a friend as me. But, indeed, it was a little queer that you should have found 'Squire where you did, a-top of an old tower with a little staircase. And yet it is just like one or two he has got here in his own hall; so that it makes it more surprising that he should run the country and quit Yorkshire to be married in France, in a castle belonging to Bonaparte—that is, it would belong to him if he was still Emperor. For if the 'Squire and Georgy were to have made this match, it is marvellous, dear Rector, that it was not done long ago in the West Riding, where both lay so handy to it.

"However, I should be glad to know how the trout bite in that river you mention, where I own the fishing-house stands comfortable enough; but as for the castle, I do hope it will not make so fine a fellow as Colonel Osmond forget old England, tho' I believe he is but Lancashire. You will please to give my humble service to him and the 'Squire, whom I can't but say I envy a bit.

"Who would have thought it after all!

"But I must give over, for clock has struck two, and I never wrote so much in all my life, no, not even to Farmer's Magazine, where, by-the-bye, my last account of fattening pigs on mashed turnips was thought so good,

that Editor says I shall always be welcome, so pray make haste home with your dear girl, and gladden us all again by the sight.

" I am,
" Dear Doctor and Friend,
" Your's till death,
J. CARELESS.

THE END.

NOTE.

THE Author wishes not so much to correct as to alter an assertion in the argument, *à priori*, as it is called, in the Ninth Chapter of this Volume, on the Natural Immortality of the Soul. It is in page 99, where it is stated that the brain is dissolved once in every forty-eight hours. Though undoubtedly the author did not venture this assertion except upon what he thought good authority, yet as he is aware how difficult it must be to prove it, and it has excited remark in very sensible men, he would rather incline to the argument as put by the late learned and ingenious as well as pious Mr. Rennell, who contents himself with stating that, from the fact of the existence of absorbents in the brain, there must be a periodical change in that organ, and this change he collects must *at least* be once in every ten years*. Now, however great the difference between ten years and forty-eight hours, the consequence drawn from the argument against the identity of the brain is altogether the same. The author is, therefore, the less anxious to rest upon it in the extent to which (relying upon the authority he followed) it was carried in the first edition.

This part of the general argument was written long before the author had the good fortune to see Mr. Rennell's Treatise. Since which he has had the still greater advantage of seeing, in a book professing only a tour of health and pleasure, but in truth possessing besides most philosophic observations upon things most interesting to man, the following concentration of almost all that can be said upon this abstruse and difficult subject. It is so clear, and at the same time so forcible, that the reader will thank me for laying it before him. I will only add that I am better pleased when I consider that those whom Mr. Rennell answered were physicians, that this still greater support should be a physician himself.

Extract from Dr. James Thomson's Tour in the Highlands and Lowlands.—p. 197.

" All anatomists and physiologists allow that the whole structure of the brain is repeatedly *renewed* in the course of life, there being not a

* " Remarks on Scepticism."

particle of the same organ in manhood which existed in youth. Now, how can an image impressed on the brain in youth be recalled in manhood, when no part of the organ remains on which the impression was actually made?

"A youth is struck with the appearance of an ivy-mantled tower; but goes abroad and thinks no more of the matter for twenty or thirty years, when, on returning, some incidental circumstance, as the road leading to the tower, and without any sight of the object itself, renews the image as vividly as when first perceived, the same brain no longer existing whereon the original picture was impressed! This, to me, indicates that memory is a function of something beyond the boundary of matter. This supposition is strengthened by the fact, that phrenologists have never been able to discover any organ of memory. It may be urged, and justly, that animals possess memory, and consequently that it is no necessary quality of an immortal soul. But animals may have a modification of mind (every animated being must have an infusion of divine intelligence) without that mind being immortal. They are circumstanced very differently from man. They are bound down within the *impassable circle of instinct*, and cannot fairly be responsible for the actions that inevitably flow from that instinct. But man has *reason* conferred on him, and *liberty* to do good or evil. If he be irresponsible, his Creator can hardly be just."

The author also takes this opportunity of complaining of the sad and we may say gross mistakes of many well-meaning and pious persons as to the religious creed to be gathered from this work. Some even of his friends have supposed it a defence of Deism distinct from Revelation; and one piece of criticism which was sent to the author says, in terms, that it seemed calculated to revive the worship of Jupiter Pater, and displace that of Jesus Christ. Those who could so misstate can scarcely have read the work. For in the outset of the argument, the precise object is propounded, viz., to amplify and prove in detail all the immense data, which Paley takes for granted as the basis of his Evidences not of Natural but of Revealed Religion; and the author only begs to refer for his defence to the following passage in this his last chapter: "The arguments that have been related, pondered over and over again, led him (Tremaine) to this, that there was no contradiction, but on the contrary, that every thing in Natural led to the support of Revealed Religion."

On the other hand, the author had the gratification to be told that these very humble attempts had satisfied the doubts of many who were either unbelievers or had not sufficiently pursued the subject. He had also the pleasure of receiving a message of approbation from the sound judging yet enthusiastic Hannah More, encouraging him to proceed to Revelation; and as he was totally unknown to Mrs More, whose Christian piety cannot be questioned, this at least shows how little the attack of the Review was deserved.

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